

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

APRIL 19, 1941

WHO'S WHO

H. C. MCGINNIS was one of the first 16,000 soldiers to reach France in the American Expeditionary Force. He writes, therefore, with intimate knowledge of conditions in the last war, and after a careful survey of conditions now existing. "I understand," he states in a covering letter, "that the army authorities, in some instances, are really worried. Congress has several investigating committees in action, but the usual red tape will hold up any prompt action." His plea is for closer cooperation between the boys and their chaplains, as well as for civilian cooperation with the chaplain. That means, all of us. . . . JAMES WILLARD concludes his article published last week on the Communist impenetration of China. Mr. Willard has only recently returned to the United States after residence and travel through China. . . . THOMAS F. QUINN is a Special Justice of the District Court of Natick, Mass. He has served as President of the Law Society of Massachusetts, of the Boston University Law School Association, and of the Alumni Sodality of Boston. . . . REV. CARL J. RYAN is the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools in Cincinnati, and also dean of Teachers College. His observations are apt, particularly this week when the Catholic Educational Association convenes at New Orleans. . . . PAUL L. BLAKELY, associate editor, offers a bit of advice and a remedy to Mr. Ford, labor leaders, capitalists and other deficients. . . . JOHN A. TOOMEY continues the important events in the young life of Tommy Fields, aged eight. . . . ELIZABETH DREW is the author of several literary guide books on drama and poetry.

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COMMENT

ANYTHING affecting freedom of the press touches a sensitive nerve in the American civic body. This fact accounts for the wide discussion provoked by the entrance of a British man-of-war into New York harbor. When Secretary of the Navy Knox requested newspapers not to publish the arrival of British battlewagons for repairs, some fear was entertained that this constituted the first of a series of steps short of censorship but heading in the direction of full censorship. The test of voluntary suppression of news came when the damaged British battleship *Malaya* steamed into New York harbor on a Sunday afternoon in full view of thousands. The majority of newspapers kept their pages bare of the arrival, but a small minority published pictures and stories of the limping vessel. It was clear that voluntary censorship had not proven altogether successful. In thanking the papers which abided by his suggestion, Secretary Knox by implication reproved the dissident publications, and was supported in this by President Roosevelt who remarked: "I much prefer to go along with the overwhelming majority of newspapers. Nothing else is in sight at this time." Whether compulsory censorship will succeed this attempt at voluntary news suppression the future alone will reveal.

ROMAN collars on the silver screen will not be seen again for many a moon, we understand, following the current production of *Men of Boys' Town*. At least, not Roman collars on Roman Catholics. Too bad, we think, for it will deprive one splendid actor, Spencer Tracy, of a role he plays most genuinely. The reason for this decision by the producers is found in the thousands of letters they get after a priest-character does his little stint on the screen, protesting that the Pope is getting a toe-hold on Hollywood, that the films are on the road to Rome. Priests have been sympathetically portrayed: they have been human, they have been kept out of the love plots, they have not been made to appear ridiculous, they have been generally manly and attractive. But plenty of people think that this sort of portrayal is unfair to organized non-Catholicism. So, the Fathers Duffy, Flanagan, *et al.*, will have to retire for a while, and there will be gnashing of teeth at the Vatican at this unmasking of another Popish plot.

THE vindictiveness that was so freely and gloatingly predicted of the nascent Vichy Government by all who saw Fascism in Marshal Pétain's noble efforts to save the remnants of France, is strangely enough not becoming manifest. Broadcasting to the nation on April 7, the Marshal pledged that nothing would be done against "former allies." General

Corap, accused of having made no attempt to stop the German advance at Sedan last May, has not been made a scapegoat. He has been exonerated. It turns out that M. Reynaud, one of the Leftists, was the one who tried to cast the blame on General Corap. Vichy is trying honestly and desperately to be temperate and fair, and it is succeeding amazingly. At the same time, the French temper is a realistic one; the Marshal admits, therefore, with sanity and perfect justification, that the good of France comes first, and that he cannot, under the circumstances, aid the former ally. This is the consideration, the good of France, that makes Vichy threaten to break through the British blockade. It is from no desire to weaken this British weapon against Hitler, but from a realization that starving Frenchmen must be fed. The old hero of Verdun certainly wants no German victory, but he knows that his first duty is to France. Can it be that Washington needs to study this lesson?

THE call of the road is in the spring air, but for obvious reasons, Americans are not traveling as they did in former years. The sea is now reserved for war purposes, and Europe, unhappily, is no place for visitors, even if they could get a passport and a place on a boat. But at home, at least a dozen State commissions are publishing beautifully illustrated booklets, and most of these indicate that the artists who used to arrange Barnum's posters have equally gifted successors. Railroads, the air-transport lines, and hotels, are said to furnish the funds, or most of the funds, to meet the cost of these publications. Many of them will be found interesting by that large number of Americans who do most of their traveling in books, either because their purses are limited, or because they have taken to heart what the author of the *Imitation* wrote centuries ago in denunciation of gadabouts.

IN these hard times, it is cheering to learn that some people still have diamonds. In fact, a gentleman named Winston, who lives in New York, has one of the largest specimens in the world, the "Presidente Vargas diamond," and it weighs 726.60 carats. On August 13, 1938, two Brazilian farmers found a dull-looking lump, an inch thick, about two and one-half inches wide, and three inches long, in the bed of the Rio Santo Antonio. As one of the men tossed it aside, he perceived a flash, and knowing that diamonds were found in that vicinity, picked it up again for closer examination, and perceived that he had wealth in his hands. They sold it to a broker in Rio de Janeiro, for \$250,000, who shipped it to London, where it was purchased by Mr. Winston for \$700,000. Mr. Winston insured it

for \$1,000,000, and then paid about seventy cents to send it by registered mail to New York, where it is now being cut up. About half the weight will be lost in this process, but it is planned to cut the diamond into twenty-three gems, the retail price of which will be several millions of dollars. The ancient art of diamond-cutting involves lengthy, difficult, and nerve-racking processes. Adrian Grasselly, who is in charge of the operation, says that at the final cleavage a doctor and a nurse will be present, because at this point diamond-cutters commonly faint away. The actual cutting or "sawing," is done by a circular blade anointed with a mixture of diamond-dust with olive oil. This blade is about three and one-half inches in diameter, and .0035 of an inch thick. The cutting of the Vargas diamond may take three months, for even though the blade can make 6,000 revolutions per minute, eight or more hours may be needed to saw through one carat. With most of the world's gold safely buried in Kentucky, and the third largest diamond carefully guarded in New York, we, or some of us at least, are not so badly off.

DEFEATED in the New York State Senate, after having passed the Assembly, was a bill designed to relax the punishment meted out to first-degree murderers. Capital punishment is, of course, perfectly consonant with Catholic ethics and morals, and beyond that it has its very practical side. If tried, as it has never been in this country, it would infallibly act as a crime deterrent. The logic of the opposite view escapes us. One criminologist, for example, while admitting that of all criminals the murderer "is the one least likely to be deterred by contemplation of the legal consequences of his act," concludes that "fear of a less extreme but more certain punishment" would probably be a much more effective deterrent. It strikes us that that conclusion, in all logic, can only be and must be: fear of the extreme *and* certain punishment is the only real deterrent. Several months ago, two killers were caught in the act on Fifth Avenue. There were no extenuating circumstances; they are not insane; public horror ran high; it was a clear open-and-shut case. They have still not paid the penalty. Will it finally be life imprisonment—which means, in our legal arithmetic, from ten to fifteen years? Justice ought to be tempered with mercy—tempered, not diluted.

WANT to be interviewed? Just write a book, any kind of book, and some newspaper will give you space that ought to be valuable wherein to express your views on things in general. Recently a Mrs. Edith Roberts wrote a tome on *This Marriage*, and so the New York *World-Telegram* for April 8 gives space over to her lamentable lucubrations. We waste this much space in retailing them, not to wax hot about them (what's the use?), but rather to let you see what good reasons we have to rejoice that Catholic views on marriage are different. Opines Mrs. Roberts:

When the marital chamber becomes a nursery, hap-

piness flies out the window. . . . The very thing a woman's love calls out for [a child] destroys her. But sentimentalists won't concede this. They will tell you that the dear, blessed little thing will bring husband and wife together. . . . Women mustn't be too good. . . . They should be taught that discretion is a far better watchword for marriage than frankness. . . . I would say to all women, find some work that is peculiarly, solely, uniquely your own. Marriage may fail you, but it never will.

The point is, however, that Mrs. Roberts does not know what marriage is. The book is admittedly biographical, and in it the young couple draw up a marriage agreement on a soiled menu in Grogan's Subway Café. In it they subscribe to "freedom in a large way . . . free love, free action." And so, marriage (!) is a failure. P.S. Mrs. Roberts was divorced last February.

SILVER'S flashing hooves will no more drum their message on the prairie sands, as the Lone Ranger rides to crush the villains and uphold the right. For the Lone Ranger is dead, ingloriously in an automobile accident. Literally millions of young boys' hearts are saddened, and it is too bad he has gone, for, all in all, the influence he exercised was a good one. Right was always right, and won through in the end. It was all good melodrama, which may not be the highest art, but is, as Chesterton pointed out, always good morals. One thing about this dashing hero may have been harmful to youth, and that was the insistence on his immortality. It is said that many boys still refuse to believe he is dead, for "the Lone Ranger does not die." Maybe, though, it was not to be taken any more seriously than the immortality of Santa Claus. He and his sponsor on the air did a real service to American youth. They, of course, do a much greater service who fire American youth with admiration for those "who ride on white horses."

ONE ingredient that makes human nature so colorful is its unpredictability. The shackles of routine will fetter it for a time, and lo—unexpectedly it will spread out in the most surprising directions. The flight of a taxi man, for instance, may explode a barrage of Shakespeare. Forced at the point of a gun to drive a hold-up man off, an Eastern taxi driver started the car, then leaped to the street and ran. The driverless taxi slightly injured several pedestrians who sued the cab company for damages. Though the case itself was not unprecedented, the culmination was, for the judge, in dismissing the suit, shot off volley after volley of Shakespeare. The taxi man was not blameworthy, His Honor asserted, because he had been commanded "to stand not upon the order of his going but to go at once," and, queried the judge: "Who can be wise, amazed, temperate, furious, loyal and neutral in a moment? No man." Vaguely sensing the friendliness hidden in His Honor's words, the taxi driver experienced an emotional pick-up. In another court the jury acquitted eleven members of a labor union, but found two defendants guilty of charges which did not appear in the indictment.

WHILE we were typing these notes, a young priest, planning a thesis in sociology, visited us. Settling a rather substantial form aft of the desk, he complained of the cleavage between the social sciences, as commonly taught, and social ethics. This is to the detriment of both branches. Meeting just this student's difficulty, the aim of the Institute of Catholic Social Studies to be opened at the Catholic University of America this summer, is to close the gap. According to the Institute's Director, the Rev. Dr. John F. Cronin, S.S., it will specialize in this integration. This sounds abstract; but it will mean in plain English that an advance will be made in seeing Catholic social thought reduced to Catholic practice, and in utilizing factual knowledge for both thought and practice.

HOME ownership as an important factor in family security was the point stressed by Father Geary, speaking before the Labor College Forum on Social and Economic Problems in Buffalo. Father Geary, who has been a member of the Board of the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority, was recently appointed a member of the National Committee on the Housing Emergency. Stating that from twenty to thirty per cent of the usual family income is spent for housing, and that this burden presses especially on the propertyless low income worker, Father Geary declared that the efforts of the Government to provide low cost housing are in accord with the Catholic principles of public well being that were outlined by Leo XIII fifty years ago and enunciated by Pius XI even more explicitly in his encyclical on Christian marriage.

HOW are you going to keep them down on the farm? Answers to this question are attracting more and more attention among Catholic circles. The Most Rev. Vincent J. Ryan, Bishop of Bismarck, N. Dak., for example, is sponsoring five Catholic Action Institutes, to be conducted in Western North Dakota from May 5 to May 11. Subjects to be treated will include Cooperatives, Credit-Unions, Vacation Schools, Youth.

MISSING links may still be missing when it is all over, but the meeting of the Catholic Anthropological Conference, held at Villanova College on April 15, showed that Catholic scientists are still scientific. The ever amazing fact that missionaries find time to increase our scientific knowledge was brought out by the Rev. Joseph G. Doherty, S.J., who has just returned *via* the Philippines from field work in the Near East. At a meeting of the Jesuit Anthropological Association, which met in conjunction with the Catholic Conference, Father Doherty read a paper on research work being done in Mindanao by the Jesuits.

OPPOSITION to pending birth-control legislation in Massachusetts is being vigorously pushed by Catholic priests and organizations. The proponents of the bill, which would permit physicians to provide contraceptive care to married persons, have prepared a petition signed by 44,000. It was charged

that many of the names were fraudulent. The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Richard J. Quinlan, Archdiocesan Director of Parochial Schools, voiced the opposition of over a million Catholics to the measure. He pointed out that within the past ten years the first grade enrolment in the Boston public schools has dropped by 3,000 pupils, and the enrolment in the first six grades by 11,993.

ZEALOUS lay Catholics in the Philippines have succeeded in having an amendment written into proposed legislation which would have granted sweeping supervisory powers to Government agents over all private as well as public institutions of learning. The original language of the legislation was such that it could be interpreted as empowering the state to intervene in purely religious and ecclesiastical matters.

SHORTAGE of food in France has made a certain amount of penance inevitable, but despite this involuntary fasting and the dispensations from fasting and abstinence issued by Bishops and Archbishops, there has certainly been more prayer, and probably more Lenten fasting and abstinence in France this year than in previous years, says an N.C.W.C. report from Limoges.

THE horrible picture of Soviet inhumanity to religious and racial minorities in Poland and the stolen Baltic countries is gradually becoming clearer. The April issue of the *Contemporary Jewish Record* contains an article by David Grodner on conditions in Soviet Poland and Lithuania. He estimates that about 200,000 people, mainly Jews, were forced to leave Warsaw on the night of September 6, 1939. Many were not allowed into Soviet Poland, could not get back into Nazi Poland, and could only wander along the no-man's-land of the border, dying of starvation and exposure. And from Catholic sources comes the revelation that Soviet authorities have refused Polish priests permission to accompany their people into Siberian prison-camps.

IMPRESSIVE manifestations of Catholic life in the life of the nation are being shown in Portugal. The newest of them is the opening of a center, conducted by the Portuguese Catholic League, the purpose of which is to make the great social encyclicals of the Popes familiar to workingmen. Nation-wide plans have been made for public commemoration of the anniversaries of the *Rerum Novarum* and the *Quadragesimo Anno*, to be held in connection with the Second Christian Fête of Work, promoted by the League of Catholic Workers.

IN these days of Released Time for religious instruction for public-school children, it is timely to note with regret the death at St. Louis, on March 31, of the Rev. John M. Lyons, S.J., who was a pioneer in the work of gathering Catholic public-school children for religious instruction. Centers were spread throughout the middle west, notably in Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, Fort Wayne, through Father Lyons' zeal.

OUR BOYS ARE IN THE CAMPS— WHAT ABOUT THEM?

H. C. McGINNIS

NATIONAL defense is more than a mobilization of a nation's armed strength. To mobilize man-power and train it in the use of the latest gadgets of war without properly protecting the morals and spirituality of the trainees is to invite defeat from within.

The rapid increase of our armed forces has caused a moral and spiritual problem about which there is much misunderstanding. The army is not a spiritual institution but a fighting machine. Its responsibility is to turn out men trained and equipped for military purposes. The army is more interested in its men's morale than in their morals, and becomes seriously concerned in their morals mostly when they interfere with soldierly efficiency. Although the majority of American officers are fine, Christian gentlemen, it is definitely not an old army custom for them to lead their men in prayer and devotions. That part of army life is left to the chaplains, and a conscientious chaplain is usually a badly overworked man.

To preserve and increase the soldiers' morale, army officials see that recreational centers and activities are provided whenever possible. However, the providing of full recreational activities is not the first consideration in the establishment of a cantonment; and right now, the army is more concerned in getting its hundreds of thousands of new men under proper shelter, equipped and molded into some semblance of military formations than it is in arranging for the boys' entertainment.

However, the establishment of generous recreational activities does not constitute a full answer to the problem. After the evening mess soldiers are usually permitted to leave camp, and it is this time out of camp that causes army officials and chaplains to worry.

Some of the new cantonments are built away from large cities and towns, and on the surface it would appear that the boys in them are subject to very few outside temptations. Nevertheless, it has been revealed recently in Congress that trailer camps have been established near many of these locations, the trailers being used for immoral and illegal purposes. Since these trailer camps are outside the jurisdiction of army authorities, their supervision falls to civilian authorities and, in many cases, to shady and corrupt politicians who are too often mindful of the financial handouts given them by vice-den operators to do more than whitewash them publicly. Bills have been introduced into Congress which, if passed, will establish zones around

certain cantonments in which the practice of prostitution will be a Federal offense. This will allow Uncle Sam to supersede civilian authorities in cleaning up vice conditions near army camps, but still will not be a complete answer.

Besides the trailer camps with their mobile dens of vice, sleek cars containing very friendly young women drive along the highways near the camps and invite the boys for rides. Of course, many of our military camps are near cities, and here the problem becomes acute. Reliable persons who have investigated moral conditions surrounding these camps report, for the most part, most deplorable conditions. Some have seen truckloads of boys returning to camp in various stages of drunkenness; others have seen the districts so crowded that they resembled county fairs at their worst. In some places, surface evidences of vice are not so apparent, the promoters scattering themselves throughout the small towns adjacent, giving a more decent appearance but not lessening the deadliness. Near one camp there are twenty-three taverns in a town of only 3,600 population. In another there are fifteen such places in one block, all competing for the soldiers' trade.

Some quiet little towns have suddenly found cantonments near them and become filled up overnight with places of so-called entertainment from which come raucous shouts which make them sound like California's honky-tonks in '49. Boys fresh from farms and small communities find thrills and glamor in these places, the like of which many of them, a few months ago, never even suspected could exist. That there will be many later regrets does not enter their heads now, for thousands of them have never had sufficient contact with vice on this scale to realize what it does to victims.

Against all this the army's most reliable weapon is punishment. Unfortunately for the boys and their futures, the punishment must come after the default and, especially in disease, comes too late. Control by punishment, especially for minor infractions of military laws, like gambling and drunkenness, usually accomplishes few results. Many soldiers look upon summary courts-martial as necessary inconveniences in their lives and find a few days in the hoosegow little different than time spent on the drill field and in fatigue duty. The exceptions are high ranking non-coms who have something more than their liberty to lose.

The A.E.F. discovered definitely that control of

vice by punishment is not the final word. When the spread of venereal diseases among A.E.F. members became threatening, unit commanders took prompt action. The men were lectured and shown very discouraging movies which depicted very convincingly the results from exposure to this evil. Previously, contraction of disease had always been punished as such; but now there was added a more severe penalty—for disobedience of orders, unless the victim could show he had reported for preventative treatment within three hours after exposure.

Many disease victims never returned home; some have since died premature deaths, and many others are still suffering disabilities induced by their misconduct. Some victims succeeded in eluding army medical officers and cajoled themselves into thinking home cures were just as good as proper treatment. Many of these misguided boys returned home, married and raised families of syphilis-infected children, themselves filling early graves or becoming patients in hospitals for the venereal insane.

Despite the conscientious efforts of unit commanders and the incessant labors of chaplains, the A.E.F. was not particularly noted for turning out any great number of perambulating sign boards of virtue. As is well known, hundreds of clean-cut youths came home as inveterate drunkards and gamblers or had lost all moral decency. Hundreds of thousands of others thank their stronger moral fibers for escaping permanent spiritual and physical damage.

How then is this vital problem to be controlled and mastered? The answer lies in two places: army chaplains and the folks back home. Several hundred Catholic priests and also hundreds of clergymen of other denominations have joined our armed forces to help in this great work, and more are being added every day. But chaplains are badly handicapped unless they get proper support from the folks of the boys in camp. In the cantonments, chapels have been built or are being built, but the services in them are not the sole answer to the chaplains' problems. Soldiers do not go to church all their spare time. In fact there is always a definite percentage of men in every military unit who act as deterrents upon those who do want to attend the regularly scheduled services.

The chaplains' greatest problems arise from the periods when no church services are scheduled and especially in cantonments where the recreation is yet to be fully organized. But even in the best organized camps the boys refuse to stay in camp every evening, and venture out to view the enticements spread so alluringly before them by unscrupulous purveyors of vice. Here is where the folks back home come in.

The home folks can do their part in two ways: first, by maintaining frequent contact with the trainees; and secondly, by supporting the chaplains through the various funds set up for that purpose. In the first place, the homes which have sent boys into the service should not establish the practice of "out of sight, out of mind." Young soldiers, especially those away from home for the first time,

appreciate more than is ever imagined a steady stream of letters from home. Many a young soldier starting out for an evening frolic has been stopped in his tracks by the timely arrival of mother's letter reminding him of the loving ones back home.

The writer, a veteran of two years in France, has seen this happen more than once. The families of the boys must not only keep the home fires burning for the absent one's return but must let him know frequently that they are burning brightly. Newsy letters, full of ordinarily inconsequential little details—those minor items which start swollen rivers of memories—are best. Frequent packages of inexpensive gifts—books, toilet articles, candy and other enjoyables—help keep the ties between boy and home firmly cemented.

But few boys have families so large that they can be kept busy writing letters home during all the time not taken up by duty and organized recreation. There will remain many huge voids to be filled up, and it is when the soldier has nothing to do that he gets into deviltry. Here is where the aid to the chaplains' funds becomes powerful. These funds are used to distribute good reading to the boys. The unit chaplain, being in closer spiritual contact with the soldier than anyone else, knows best what is needed and how much.

This well chosen and carefully distributed reading matter gives many a boy his first insight into spiritual life, for many of the trainees have had little or no religious training and, like every normal person, are soul-hungry for the spiritual truths of life. The results from this selected reading are often surprising as well as priceless. In countless other cases it supplants the sexy, trashy magazines always found in plenteous quantities around barracks and which are so often the wells of inspiration for soul and body damaging off-duty escapades. To still others, good reading fills in the void caused by the absence of regular spiritual contacts in civilian life.

Even the families which have not a boy in camp have a serious responsibility toward their community and nation in helping the boys and their chaplains in every way possible. Conscription is probably here for years to come. This means that each year upwards of a million young trainees will be taken from their civilian lives to enter an existence new and strange. Each year there will be upwards of a million young men released back into their communities. These young men will be the future responsible citizens of the nation, the fathers of its families, the governing forces in their communities' spiritual and moral life. One million men a year re-entering civilian responsibilities are an important factor in the well-being of the nation; and it becomes the patriotic duty of every family, whether or not they have a son in service, to do everything possible for the spiritual and moral welfare of these young men in training.

Guns, planes, tanks and battleships are the answer to external dangers, but keenly alive spiritual and moral natures are the only real defense against the dangers which always threaten a people's existence from within.

COMMUNIST THREAT IN CHINA AND JAPAN

JAMES WILLARD

(Continued from last week)

COMMUNIST morals as preached in China are certainly straight from Moscow or hell.

For example, I mentioned that women as well as men were called for army service. All are equal; men and women are alike. Women march shoulder to shoulder in the ranks with the men, wear the same uniforms, cut their hair in the same style, bear the same arms, and no distinction is made in duties. Once, while I was visiting a Communist officer, the conversation was interrupted by the announcement that Comrade Wang had a report. Comrade Wang, a soldier, entered, and it came as a complete surprise to discover from the voice, that the soldier was a woman. Nothing in her appearance betrayed her sex. The drill of the army consists mainly in running exercises. It is claimed that the army can run a hundred Chinese miles overnight.

The confinement to the house of the Chinese women in the past has been most strict, indeed, inordinately so. But in the Communist version of enlightenment, the correction goes far to excess. They aim to destroy the age-old modesty of Chinese women. They do not hesitate to proclaim openly: "Don't blush at anything! Down with shame!"

The boldness of their teaching even dares to attack openly China's immemorial institution of the family. Filial reverence and obedience, unity of family, extraordinary interdependence of its members, had been the keynote of China's sociology long before Confucius consecrated them and made them sacred in his immortal writings. But Communism laughs at parental reverence and obedience: "All men are equals. What is father? What is mother? They are make-children machines, and that is all."

But while the formulated plan of a subtle Machiavellian attack upon religion is the official scheme, in practice the use of force is notable.

In the Pao-ting district, some sixty Chinese priests had to be recalled from their post because of immediate danger to their lives. Several, indeed, were killed. In many other districts, the work of evangelization is at a standstill. One of the foreign priests, of whom I am proud to be a friend, told me he had received three letters threatening his life. His work of relief during and after a recent horrible disaster should make him worthy of every gratitude of the Chinese nation. Yet I have just learned that after his most recent journey of mercy, he is unable to return to his province because of Communist hostility. From one district comes the report that one thousand Christians were buried alive, solely because they were Christians. From an

eminent man and one in a most advantageous position to know, I have heard the remark that the torture of the Christians of Rome cannot compare with some undergone by Chinese martyrs of 1940 during their execution at the hands of the Communists.

Foremost of all should be cited the case of Father Lebbe, C.M. Known throughout China by Christian and pagan alike, he was surely the most loved European in China; he was, in fact, a Chinese citizen by naturalization. At the beginning of the war he gave himself and his native congregation of Little Brothers to the work of aiding the wounded on any front. His energy and organizing ability proved of greatest service to the country, especially in the war's early days when medical help had to be hastily organized. Though he and his Brothers had helped many wounded Communists, they incurred the hostility of the Communist organization because they were a Christian body working from motives of Christian charity. Father Lebbe and his helpers were taken by the Communists. Father Lebbe was forced to witness the burying alive of forty-five of his Brothers and associates. He himself was condemned to death, but through the intercession of Bishop Yu-Pin, was finally released. He died shortly afterwards from the effects of his imprisonment. To many in China today a speculation on future Christianity there presents a pretty black and pessimistic picture.

But Japan is expending tremendous forces against Communism in China. Are they adequately coping with the Red problem and checking its rise?

First, let us not forget that it is *Japan who is responsible for the growth of Communism in China*. Her forces debilitated and scattered the troops of General Chiang, the real suppressor of Communism there. It was the presence of the Japanese army which gave the spirit and life to the Red movement.

Further, in Japan's game of intrigue, of playing Communist and Chiang against each other, she is actually aiding both sides with munitions in those sections where they can be used on each other. And do not let the Red propaganda convince you that the Communist armies are the friends and allies of the Chungking Government. I have personally seen battles between the two, and tended Chinese soldiers shot with Red bullets.

Lastly, with Japan now forced in certain sectors to cross swords with Communists, she has met a hydra with which she does not know how to cope.

The Communist leaders explain: "We are like bed-bugs. The Japanese are constantly aware of our presence, but they can't find us. We have run away in the night and hidden in cracks out of their reach, where we thrive and multiply only to attack and harass them again when they are off their guard."

Further, the threat and menace of Communism in Japan itself has become so acute that every political force is being exerted to stave off a Red *coup d'état*. The state of mind of her people has made the Islands an incubator for Red agitation. Indeed, it would not be the event of military defeat which would destroy the Japanese nation and sever that

unbroken succession of Emperors of these last twenty-six hundred years, but rather the occasion such a defeat would give Communism to deliver its killing blow.

What irony! What a disaster for one-third of the world's population, if the final result of Japan's campaign should end in the establishment of a New Order in East Asia—a Red order, quite different from Nippon's original intentions!

The real problem in East Asia presents a fearful dilemma. Perhaps the whole solution lies on the insertion of a third member—the will of a little man in bomb-shattered Chungking. There seems only one defender in Asia against the threat of Japan and of Communism, and that is Mr. Chiang. The Generalissimo is the heart and soul and life of China's defense. If his spirit were removed from the scene, the East would be lost. Let not America's vision of the Orient be blinded. There are two threats in Asia, and perhaps Japan is not the greater.

CAN OUR COUNTRY REMAIN A DEMOCRACY?

THOMAS F. QUINN

IN order to meet the present crisis, executive power in government has been increased to the point where it has become all but dominant. Despite this dominance, all of us hear a constant refrain that democracy has become dynamic, that democracy will flourish under increased executive power and that after the crisis power will be returned to the people and will be re-directed under republican forms.

Anyone would be rash if he asserted that certain aspects of democracy would not survive. But it seems to me that equal rashness is apparent in connection with any expectation that democracy as we have known it heretofore, either in the field of government or in the field of industry, is likely to be enhanced, or even survive, after a dominance by executive power for the duration of this conflict.

For the field of government I will accept "government of, by, and for the people" as a sufficient definition of democracy. In order that democracy might be served in our complex society, the people reserved their unalienable rights; they reserved also to the several States and to themselves all powers not granted specifically to the Federal arm; and they established a system of checks and balances between the Congress, the executive and the judicial branches, together with an elective representative system for the enactment and administration of laws. A duality of citizenship exists in the State and in the United States. A civil Union under God was contemplated in order that the com-

mon defense and the general welfare might be served, and under which man's individual rights and legitimate property would be protected.

In every past crisis the President has exercised extraordinary powers as President and as Commander-in-Chief of our armed forces, and the Congress has delegated other powers not otherwise conferred on the Executive.

The safeguards and limitations of the Constitution survived, however, because of the will and the strength of the people. The people demanded a full measure of civil liberty and abhorred regimentation with a permanent extraordinary armed force to make it effective. Citizens of the United States heretofore were not in danger of being made creatures of the state, and this largely because of their self-reliance and their family-reliance.

During the years in which the present crisis has been building, the emphasis upon liberty has been changed to emphasis upon security, and it is this change in the disposition of the people that make executive dominance quite a different thing from anything paralleled in any previous crisis, and places liberty, democracy, government of or by the people, in peril. The cry, "the People Will It," has wrought a change, but a system completely dominated by any executive never will provide assured safety for the rights of minorities and will never add up to the content of democracy.

A hasty review of Federal activities during recent years will provide ample evidence of the trend toward security under Federal auspices, accompanied by an abandonment of the system that safeguarded liberties. The States, the Congressional districts and even municipalities have leaned more and more upon Federal largess, with consequent Federal domination. The spur and the whip of Federal spending have brought them to heel. The Congress has been termed a rubber stamp. In the ever-increasing domain of what has been termed "public law" the administrative agencies dominated by the executive have been permitted to take over with a sort of absolutism removed from effective judicial scrutiny and review. Let none of this be understood as a disparagement of security. That is a proper objective. It may be understood in full force, however, as a disparagement of an alleged but illusory security under executive domination at the price of effective protection of individual liberty.

The Federal encroachments in the field of industry have been so painful that private industry is discounting an ultimate surrender. Labor in private organizations and private capital as well have come so far under Federal dominance that each is seeking to control the monster rather than get together and beget freedom from their voluntary communion. All that is happening to the little fellow in that titanic struggle needs no emphasis from me.

These comments may bring serious reflection upon whether private enterprise or democratic safeguards in the field of government are likely to survive an aggravation of the present trend. No one should grieve if these great concentrations of private wealth are leveled off in the interest of all the people, nor should anyone deplore Federal as-

sistance in establishing a more just order of things. We hope that proper checks and balances will not be forgotten and that the Federal steed will not be permitted to take the bit in its teeth and drag after it all the gains of mankind.

Is there any hope for effective controls against a dominant centralization? I can see no human hope for a long future period if this nation is brought into war. If we should avoid war, a united purpose on the part of labor and capital will permit a survival of private industry with governmental concepts serving to protect private property. That great sweep of public opinion required to support such a survival will be inspired only if the reasonable security that all require is made a corner stone of a new program. We must fit security into our private way of life rather than permit security of those who labor to be solely the concern of government.

The recent concept of private master and private servant, with no obligation other than a pay envelope, is gone. All over the world we find a willingness on the part of men to accept a common identity under the state rather than continue a system that left families without common necessities. It seems to me that if world events should cause us to rely primarily upon national or hemisphere resources rather than upon a gruesome serfdom resulting from unbridled world competition, we are more likely to attain in the United States a community relationship independent of Federal control.

So many limitations and habits of thought have been lifted by the pressure for state Socialism that offsetting speculative thought is quite warranted. It may well be that the only effective means for retaining private property, while assuring security to the workers, is by means of planned cooperation between capital and labor toward reasonable shares in plant ownership. There is nothing in our system of government that requires competition between capital and labor rather than cooperation. The control of oppressive capital combinations through limitations upon the corporate device has been canvassed, but so much ivy has grown in its past half-century that it seems better to work out cooperation through public opinion rather than through Federal statutes alone.

If labor unions should choose to work out a sharing program which would lend stability for workers in each industry through a share in plant ownership, it might so reform its present methods to that better end that a sufficient public support would be gained. Even hard-bitten industrialists must observe now that, unless the private purse of workers is made stable and ample for necessities and all reasonable social requirements, the state will be allowed or called upon to dominate all industry. Many industrialists do see this, but they cling to a hope that they will dominate the state. The fallacy of attempting to reconcile a general private advantage with government control must be clear from a statement of the proposal, and the dead-end results of the effort to reconcile may be seen from events at home as well as from the ruin in nations abroad.

The conclusion that I draw is that democracy can survive in the United States only through cooperative private action, particularly such industrial cooperation between the capital and labor groups as will effectuate a participation by each laborer in the ownership of the industry in which he engages—not merely a participation in temporary fruits. It is almost needless to point out that to obtain such cooperation the present labor leadership must be reformed as well as the capitalist group.

EDUCATORS FORGET THE NEED FOR GOD

CARL J. RYAN



THE annual meeting of the American Association of School Administrators and Allied Organizations is the largest, and so far as public education is concerned, the most important educational meeting of the year. This year it was held at Atlantic City, the last week in February, and was attended by some 12,000 delegates. It will be some time before the official proceedings of the various units represented at the convention make their appearance. There is issued, however, a summary of the convention in a paper called the *Gist* which appeared shortly after the close of the convention, and which gives us a good idea of what took place at this meeting.

The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States furnished the keynote of the convention. More specifically the theme was: "To Provide for the Common Defense, to Promote the General Welfare, to Secure the Blessings of Liberty."

In one way or another, many of the addresses dwelt upon the subject of education for the democratic way of life. A wide variety of means was proposed for achieving this result: More democracy in the class room, participation of the pupil in the making up of the curriculum, socialized procedures in the class room, publishing school papers in which students share in formulating the editorial policy, excursions into the community, teaching consumer education, better health education, more vocational education, teacher participation in determining educational administrative policies, etc. Now I have no particular fault to find with these various objectives so far as they go, except that not one of them really gets down to fundamentals. Not one of these proposals, nor all of them together, will give the student an adequate understanding of the basic principles on which our rights and liberties rest.

In a pamphlet, *Underprivileged Children of the Public Schools* (America Press), the Rev. G. Stuart Hogan once made this statement: "It is interesting to note that a graduate of a modern public school or secular college could not write the Dec-

laration of Independence from knowledge received as part of his school education for all knowledge of God and man's relations to God are excluded from the curricula." With this thought in mind I read the *Gist* from beginning to end in order to see whether or not the Atlantic City meeting would seem to confirm this statement.

The first thing that struck me as significant was that the Preamble to the Constitution rather than the Declaration of Independence should furnish the theme of the convention. The Preamble tells *how* the people proposed to safeguard their liberties. The Declaration is more fundamental; it tells on what grounds the people claim their liberties; it lays down three fundamental ideas which form the basis of our democratic system of government: (1) The existence of God, our Creator; (2) the existence of natural rights—rights conferred by the Creator; (3) the function of the government is to protect these rights. These fundamental rights are not concessions by the Government or human society; they are ours by natural law.

It is perfectly true that such concepts can be arrived at by the natural light of reason, provided a person has some training in philosophical reasoning. The difficulty, however, is that the great mass of people are not trained in philosophical thought. If they are to accept these ideas it must be on religious grounds. Hence, so far as the great majority of people go, we will not be able to give an adequate defense of our right to liberty without the teachings of religion. To what extent, if any, was this recognized by the educators?

That religion has a place in life was not entirely overlooked. A Catholic priest and a Methodist minister touched upon the importance of religion in the life of the individual and of society. That such speakers would recognize the place of religion in life was to be expected. So far as the other secular educators were concerned, there were only a few passing references here and there to the necessity of religion. One school superintendent suggested an indirect way of teaching some religion in school. Mr. C. B. Glenn, dwelling upon the relation between religion and art said that "through classroom activities in the drama, art and music may religion be taught in the schools."

There was one secular educator, whose address dwelt on the connection between American ideals and religion. This was Dean Smith, of Indiana University. For many years Professor Smith has stood out as a rather unique figure among persons occupying a responsible position in a State university. He has made a number of studies on the subject of religious and moral education and in one of them he makes a statement in which he evidently includes himself among "those who believe that it is possible to have religious training in public schools without conflicting with our American ideal of the separation of church and State." To those who are somewhat familiar with Professor Smith's work in the past it is no surprise that when given a place on the convention program he should choose to speak on some phase of religious education. But in so doing he stood out almost alone.

The leaders of public education in this country do not seem to recognize the fact that the defense of American democratic ideals must ultimately rest on religious concepts. As already shown, their various suggestions for teaching democracy and inculcating loyalty to American ideals deal only with the accidentals and with secondary issues. It is like the man who would weatherstrip the windows of his house but do nothing about the termites undermining the joist in the basement.

In one of the speeches this significant statement occurs: "A people will fight vigorously only for that which it understands, believes in and cherishes." The many proposals advanced for teaching democracy might very well make people believe in and cherish it, but certainly not to understand it, in the sense of recognizing its fundamental basis. Not a single speaker called attention to the fact that the doctrine of natural rights, so clearly indicated in the Declaration of Independence, is fundamental to our form of government. It apparently has never dawned upon them that the rejection of this doctrine by our colleges and universities is undermining the very foundation of democracy, and is laying the basis for the very type of government they so vehemently denounce.

After reading the *Gist* from beginning to end, I am convinced more than ever of the truth of Father Hogan's statement that a graduate of a modern public school or secular college could not write the Declaration of Independence.

If those engaged in public education are unable to recognize the most important problem facing them today, there are those outside the profession who do. Mrs. Harper Sibley, an Episcopalian, recently addressed nearly 1,000 Protestant women in Cincinnati. Some of her remarks as quoted in the daily press were as follows:

Our founding fathers enunciated a great principle—that all men are created free and equal—which meant that men were free and equal in the sight of God. That was such a definite part of their thinking that they did not deem it necessary to so state it. . . . To say that men have inalienable rights again presupposes a relationship to the Creator, for if those rights come from the state they can be revoked by the state and are not inherent in man himself. . . . Without these basic beliefs, democracy will be destroyed, not by attacks from without, but from disintegration within. We shall lose it and shall deserve to lose it.

When in addition to the defense of democratic principles we consider the need of solving such social problems as crime, juvenile delinquency, immorality, and the like, it becomes evident that the most pressing problem facing public education today, is to find some means of bringing religious instruction to the millions of youths in our public-school system. The movement to accomplish this purpose has already made some headway, but it has gone unnoticed by the assembled delegates at Atlantic City. While organized education is concerned with many things, it seems to be unaware of, or unwilling to face, its main problem. If this problem is to be solved it seems that the solution will come from without, not within, the educational profession.

LABOR TROUBLE AND VITAMIN DEFICIENCY

PAUL L. BLAKELY, S.J.

PAUNCHY industrialists are apt to yell "Communist," when anyone mentions the living wage or the workers' right to organize. By way of social compensation, hollow-cheeked wage earners may develop an interest in the cost of high explosives, neatly-packaged for the extermination of paunchy industrialists.

Many reasons for this cat-and-dog attitude have been assigned by the learned, but, like the virus of the common cold, the real reason has thus far managed to filter through their intellects, escaping into the void of the unknowable. I am therefore emboldened to submit another explanation, this one fresh from the laboratories of the Mayo Clinic. The trouble with both industrialists and wage earners is a deficiency of thiamine chloride, "the morale vitamin," commonly styled vitamin B1.

All that I know about vitamins is what I hear, and I hear that they are useful and, at present, much too expensive for use by common folk. This is regrettable, for I learn from a column published by *Science Service* that these troubles which threaten to tie up production of munitions for the use of embattled democracies everywhere except in the United States, would pine and fade if all of us were fed liberally on vitamin B1. For laboratory experiments at the Mayo Clinic show that lack of this vitamin is accompanied by irritability, unwillingness to cooperate, and, in general, by all those anti-social surges which we curb but poorly before we have taken our morning coffee.

To review a few of the laboratory reports, it seems that when kept too long on a diet lacking vitamin B1, wage-earners and industrialists develop an emotional strain. This strain makes the first present unreasonable demands, and causes the second to call for the militia when presented with demands that are reasonable. The reports do not state that workers and industrialists were herded into the laboratory, along with the rabbits and the guinea-pigs, but they do include the story of an experiment in Canada. It seems that some companies of soldiers, recruited from the relief-rolls, were found to be too depressed to drill, and others were discovered to be too defiant to obey orders. Instead of calling on the provost-marshal, the wise commandant consulted a physician, who at once ordered a car-load of vitamin B1. The results were marvelous, for "these trouble-makers became perfectly manageable and good soldiers."

All this may be perfectly true. I pass it on to our rulers at Washington, commending it particularly to Secretary Ickes, for further examination, and suggest a remedy of which I heard a great many years ago. We did not call it a vitamin in those dark

ages, but to bring it up to date, I would name it vitamin C complex. It has been warmly recommended by Leo XIII in his Labor Encyclical of fifty years ago, by Pius XI, in his Labor Encyclical of May 15, 1931, and by the reigning Pontiff, Pius XII. I label it "C complex," because its chief ingredient is Charity, with the natural products, forbearance and common sense. Mr. Ford would be the better for huge doses, and so would the A.F. of L., the C.I.O., and the managers of most of our large industries.

Since Mr. Ford conducts the largest single industrial unit in the world, to him particularly do I commend my prescription. I do not know that he is notably lacking in charity, but when he proclaims that under no circumstances will he bargain collectively with a labor union, I conclude that his system shows a deficiency of common sense and forbearance. Perhaps not all Ford workers are as zealous as they might be in making the munitions of war, but when Mr. Ford recently expressed his hostility to labor unions, he simply asked for what he got. This is not recorded by way of denying the constitutional right of any man to say and publish what he thinks about labor unions, but simply to indicate that Mr. Ford is laboring under a hypertension which disturbs his mental balance. A deficiency of vitamin C complex is plainly indicated.

The steel-mill operators show an even more deplorable deficiency. All have a bad case-history, and labor can hardly be blamed if it considers that the recent improvement is more apparent than real. It may become necessary to hold the steel companies down by force, for the injection of gross doses of my vitamin C complex.

Walking into another ward, we find a long line of pink and red labor leaders. Here too gross dosage is indicated. These men are reasonable when they assert the right to strike. But they show a frightful need of vitamin C complex when, under this right, they embrace sabotage, the destruction of property, the beating up of non-union workers, the refusal to consider the public welfare, and defiance of the civil authority. These misguided men are as blind as the most reactionary of capitalists.

I feel sure that the adoption of vitamin C complex by all of us would produce most salutary effects. Mr. Ford and other industrialists would stop shouting about Communists and begin to reflect that the meat on which Communism grows fat is the employer who does not respect rights wherever they are found. Fanatical labor-leaders would stop shouting about their rights, and meditate solemnly on their duties. The general public would insist upon sane legislation regulating the relations of wage-earners and employers, but would not forget that industrial disputes cannot be eliminated simply by passing a law against them. The prospect is so bright, that if my prescription had not been elaborated by those eminent physicians of the soul, Leo XIII and Pius XI, I should confess to some misgivings.

Best of all, this vitamin C complex is not costly. All of us can reach into our hearts and there find it, if we really wish to use it.

THIRD-GRADER TOMMY FIELDS SAW HIS CHANCE AND DARED IT

JOHN A. TOOMEY

TOMMY FIELDS, aged eight, did not hear one word of the lesson Sister Saint Pierre was expounding to the class. His mind was wholly occupied by a pressing problem—the approaching recreation session in the school yard. Each day for more than a week, Tommy had been the target of a war of nerves, the accumulative effect of which was mounting up to more than he could bear.

He was a strange victim of circumstances.

Through one of those egregious blunders which erupt at times in the best-organized establishments, he had been appointed a server at Mass, despite the school's age-old custom banning third-grade boys from the acolyte status. This break with tradition, even though it sprung from error, was hotly resented by certain fourth-grade pupils. Indeed, admirals learning from their morning paper that an ensign had been placed in command of the two-ocean fleet could scarcely have been more outraged than these boys were over young Fields' elevation to the altar. The fact that the error had been quickly rectified, that Tommy's appearance in the sanctuary had been short-lived and somewhat inglorious, did not mitigate matters at all. The affair established a dangerous precedent, and third-graders must be taught to know their place.

The bell for recreation rang. A death-cell inmate overhearing the warden tell a guard: "The chair is ready," would understand how Tommy felt. The 1,254 pupils of the Immaculate Conception parochial school began marching in formation out of class rooms, down corridors and steps to the school yard. Tommy, walking in a column, gazed about, hoping for a chance to sneak out of line and hide somewhere; but whether he looked forward or backward, his eye fell upon some vigilant Sister. He could not escape from the column and was soon in the yard, being pounced on by his tormentors. They drew him to a corner, where a crowd gathered around.

"Say, Fields, how is it you're not serving Mass any more?" queried nine-year-old Joe Nolan, who had been posing this same question for a week. Tommy hung his head, made no answer.

"I heard you messed things up something awful," Dick Richards jeered.

This stung Tommy to a retort. "I did not," he cried; "Father Foley said I did pretty well, seeing it was my first time."

"Father Foley's deaf. He couldn't hear the beating you were giving the bell," Sammy Felton inter-

jected. The bell was Tommy's *bête noire*.

"How many times did you ring the bell?" inquired Archie Sanders.

"So often they had to get it fixed," said Phil Smith. Loud "ha-ha's" from the crowd punctuated the questioning. The harassing continued until the approach of one of the Sisters caused the group to disperse.

Curiously, most of Tommys inquisitors, though fourth-grade eligibles, were boys who had failed to receive advancement to acolyte status, and their zeal in badgering him may have sprung from mixed motives rather than from all-out loyalty to fourth-grade prerogatives.

Tommy walked home from school, disconsolate. He had reached the limit of endurance. Something had to be done; anything would be better than this daily ordeal. An idea born of desperation began flitting around in his little mind, an idea so daring that he would have shrunk from it at any other time except this one of grave and pressing emergency.

At home, he paced up and down his third-floor-back room, toying with the idea, hesitating, turning hot and cold, as General Wolfe must have toyed and hesitated and turned hot and cold before launching his venturesome attack on the great rock of Quebec.

The projected scheme was so bold it took Tommy's breath away. Suppose his crisis-born courage should evaporate before he was half-way through? Suppose he was seen? His disgrace might become still greater. But no; nothing could be worse than the *status quo*. He had to do something, and he could think of no other expedient. He had nothing to lose but his chains. He decided to go, to go that very evening after dark, thus lessening the chance of detection. Tommy's mother had inspired in him a great reliance on prayer and now, in this heavy trial, he knelt down and asked God to give him the tremendous courage he would need.

Shortly after dinner that evening, Papa Fields took the papers up to the sitting room. Mama, Catherine and Aunt Jane, who had dropped in to assist with the making of Catherine's new dress, took up location in the parlor. Tommy hovered around the hat rack, until he perceived that his brothers and sisters were out of sight, when he noiselessly eased his overcoat and hat from the rack, put them on and stepped quietly through the front door. On his way down the street, he kept

gazing furtively about for boys from the school and was enormously encouraged when he reached the rectory without having encountered a single schoolmate.

He climbed to the rectory porch and here his first misadventure occurred. He found he was too little to reach the door bell. Even standing tiptoe did no good. Stumped for a while, he finally took a lead pencil from his pocket and with that was able to give the bell button a number of unsteady pokes.

The door swung open. "What is it?" the housekeeper inquired.

"Please, I would like to see Father Foley," the tiny fellow in front of her replied.

"Father Foley has visitors."

Though considerably taken back by this unforeseen predicament, Tommy had now gone too far for retreat. The housekeeper might know who he was and tell Charley Rooney, the sexton, that young Fields had been slinking in at night and asking for Father Foley.

"It's very important," Tommy rejoined, haltingly.

"Father Donlon's on sick calls. Is it a sick call you're after?"

"No, but it's important."

"Well, tell me what it is, and I'll ask Father Foley if he wants to see you. His visitors are getting ready to leave."

Tommy did not know what to say. While he was hesitating, the light on the porch suddenly went on, and three strange priests followed by Father Foley began filing out on the porch. To summon enough courage to face Father Foley alone had been all that Tommy ever hoped to achieve. Father Foley plus three strange priests were far too much for his stock of nerve. He turned and started to run off the porch into the night. Halfway to the top step, he tripped and sprawled face downward on the porch floor.

Father Foley picked him up, as the housekeeper vouchsafed the information: "He was just telling me he wanted to see you about something very important." Father Foley adjusted his hearing apparatus and asked: "Are you hurt?"

"No, Father."

"Aren't you the little boy who served my Mass one day last week?"

"Yes, Father."

"What's your name?"

"Tommy Fields, Father."

"Well, if you wanted to see me, why did you start running away?"

Tommy couldn't explain. "Perhaps we scared him," one of the strange priests suggested.

"Well, Tommy, what is this important thing you want to tell me?"

Though the whole diocese seemed to be muscling in on his secret, it was now or never for hard-pressed Tommy.

"Please, Father, could you appoint me a regular altar boy, even though I'm only in the third grade?"

There was a pause. Smiles began to play on all the features present except Tommy's.

"Is that what you wanted to see me about?" Father Foley inquired.

"Yes, Father."

One of the strange priests spoke up: "Why does the little fellow say: 'Even though I'm only in the third grade?'"

"Tommy, the Archbishop wants to know why you said that," Father Foley advised. The revelation that one of the strange priests was the Archbishop did not make an overpowering impression on Tommy. To him, Father Foley was the active head of the Church.

He stammered out: "Because third-grade boys don't get appointments." He was somewhat amazed to learn that the Archbishop, and even Father Foley, were ignorant of this sacred ecclesiastical tradition.

Father Foley addressed the Archbishop: "Well, Your Excellency, do you think I should appoint him?"

The Archbishop was chuckling. "Why, Father Foley, I don't see how you can hesitate. Certainly, appoint him. I'll give you authority. I have an indulgent to waive the third-grade matter."

"Very well, then. Tommy, I'll tell Mother tomorrow that the Archbishop has appointed you an altar boy. But you must promise not to bang the bell the way you did last week. Will you promise me that?"

"Yes, Father."

"All right, now, run along home."

"Thank you very much, Father. Thank you very much, Archbishop." Tommy's eyes were radiant. Out on the sidewalk he waited to see the Archbishop and the two priests step into their automobile and drive off, and then turned his face homeward. His mind was ablaze with lights like a town celebrating an unexpected history-making victory. Into his ears floated the conversation that would take place on the morrow, the conversation that would bring utter discomfiture to Joe Nolan and his pals.

"Say, Fields, why aren't you serving Mass any more?"

"Didn't you hear? I've been appointed a regular altar boy."

"Oh, yeah. By who?"

"Father Foley and the Archbishop."

"The Archbishop?"

"Yes, the Archbishop." Tommy could see the eyes of the fourth-graders popping out of their heads, could observe them slinking away amid the loud guffaws of his third-grade admirers.

He got into the house, peered into the parlor. His mother, Aunt Jane and Catherine were still fooling around the dress. He decided he would wait until morning to divulge the breath-taking news to his mother. Up in his room, he tried for a short time to do some school home-work, but Father Foley, the Archbishop, the two strange priests appeared between his eyes and the paper. He gave up, put on his little pajamas and knelt by the bed. After thanking God ecstatically, he asked God to aid him in his new career, and to give him special help on the bell.

FIFTY GOLDEN YEARS

UNIQUE is the good fortune of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People to have their Foundress, Mother M. Katharine Drexel, participate in the Golden Jubilee of their establishment, celebrated April 18 to 20 of this year. The task that this unusual leader and her fourteen first companions in Religion set themselves fifty years ago was frankly superhuman. While the passage of time has brought about an astounding development into a body of 440 Sisters with thirty-six missions and forty-three schools in eighteen States, it has not much lessened the superhuman element. In days when armed nations use desperate efforts of diplomacy and strategy to avoid battle on two fronts, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament gaily threw themselves into a spiritual warfare on the two most difficult fronts that American missionary life could offer: the apostolate of the Indian and the apostolate of the Negro.

Poverty, backwardness, geographic isolation, neglect, are obstacles enough to make stout hearts quail. The Church's annals are bright with heroes and heroines of charity who grappled with these challenges to Christian patience and zeal. But, in addition, the Indian front and the Negro front were fenced with the harsh barbed-wire of human prejudice and downright hostility. Patterns of thinking prevailed that sharply conflicted with the high yet simple purpose to which the Sisters were devoted: "To lead the Indian and the Colored Races to the knowledge of God and make of them living temples of Our Lord's Divinity."

These words meant little for those who looked upon the American Indian first, as a dangerous enemy; later as a pawn for political exploitation; or, at best, a proving-ground for ethnological experiments. They meant still less for those who were convinced that the Negro was a hopelessly inferior creature and were interested solely in seeing that he be kept available for any labor that might be exacted of him but for no other purpose in life.

But with all their difficulties, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament have enjoyed the aid and guidance of a Providence seldom offered to any of the scheming statesmen of this world. The pledge of that Providence was the creative suggestion given to Mother Katharine by Pope Leo XIII, that led to her Foundation; and the cooperation in those early years of Bishop O'Connor, of Pittsburgh, and Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia. One of its most evident signs today is the amazing creation of Xavier University, in New Orleans, the first Catholic college for Negroes in this country, with its manifold departments, high scholastic standards and unparalleled equipment.

New problems arise as old ones are solved; but the Hierarchy, the clergy, the laity of this country are resolved that this great work in all its manifold phases must go on. What the friends of the work do to ensure its continuance will redound in innumerable blessings for the life of the Church in this country.

EDITOR

AT DEARBORN

AN election in the Ford Motor Works has at last been ordered by the National Labor Relations Board. This brings the problem of group representation squarely up to Mr. Ford, and it is to be hoped that the election will be so conducted that the workers can choose, without interference from the Government, from rival unions, and from their employer. Some of these ordered elections have satisfied neither workers nor employers, and have put both at the mercy of professional trouble-makers. If this election fails, the Government's war program will be gravely imperilled.

BOSSY IN TO

LINCOLN once said that he laughed with Artemus Ward whenever he wanted to keep from crying about disasters that he couldn't prevent. We commend this practice to the Governor of Massachusetts, who has recently expressed his concern over the invasion of State rights, and the assumption of State duties, by satraps sent out from Washington. That is not the Governor's language, but it represents his mind with fair accuracy.

The particular phase of invasion which excited the Governor's apprehension is the development of the Federal Government's relief plans. These tend directly to expand the powers of Washington, he fears, and to lessen the rightful authority of the States. Represented by some one or two among the hundreds of bureaus and agencies that burgeon along the Potomac, or, more accurately, by an underling from one of these numerous legal creations, the Government lays down rules and regulations, and these must be obeyed, complains the Governor, whether or not "they work." In many instances, he adds, "They just won't work."

Of course, "they just won't work." When the Government undertakes its benevolent activities, it insists upon having its way, or there will be no benevolent activities. To the Government, there is neither Trojan nor Tyrian, and it perceives no distinction between the snows of the Adirondacks, and the sands of the San Antonio country. It seems wholly unable to understand that what might be admirably adapted to central Vermont can lose all its efficacy when

CHARITY

FOURTEEN years ago, Pius XII, then Apostolic Delegate in Germany, warned workers and employers to keep clear of the error of concluding that "purely economic measures are of themselves sufficient to cure the evils which are overwhelming the world." The strikes which have been springing up since the first of the year, stress the wisdom of this warning. We have never had more mediation boards, acting under legislation intended to establish industrial peace, and we have rarely had as many strikes in so short a space of time. What we need is not more law, but more charity.

IN THE ORCHARD

applied to Central Georgia, but Georgia will take what is offered in the name of the great god uniformity, or Georgia will do without. The Government gets its uniformity, but the chief products are wails and waste.

We join our wails to those of the Governor of Massachusetts, knowing well that they will be ineffective, because they come too late. Twenty years ago, the whole country hotly debated the extension of Federal funds to schools in the States, but today these funds are voted, and there is not a murmur from the country. Every State in the Union is the happy hunting-ground of Federal agents, sent by Washington to teach our people how to farm, how to run their factories, how to bring up their children, how to wash windows, and what to do when old Bossy gets into the apple-orchard, and the Federal veterinary is out on another case. Our children are raised on Federal formulas (unless a Federal formula for not having children has been adopted) and when they are old enough, they ride in a Federal-subsidized bus over Federal roads to a school sustained by Federal funds, and here they are entertained by Federal films from the Federal Office of Education, and regaled at noon on Federal buns and milk.

There is no evidence to show that a parcel of bureaucrats at Washington can administer functions belonging to the States. There is convincing evidence that the attempt will insure disaster. But as long as the States sell their birthright for Federal pottage, the swift progress to totalitarianism will continue.

ARE WE AT WAR?

BY those who hold to technicalities, it may be argued that this country is not in a state of war. Congress alone is empowered by the Constitution to declare war, and Congress has not used its exclusive authority in this respect. Yet we have already spent billions of dollars, and are preparing to spend more billions, on projects that can have but one purpose, and that one purpose is war. The Administration warns us that we must be prepared to make great sacrifices, and that every man must do his part to establish a four-fold freedom in every country threatened by tyranny. The industrial system of the country is geared for the speedy production of munitions, and more than 1,000,000 young men have been conscripted for military training.

If we are not actually at war, we are at least preparing for war. The inference is permissible that we are preparing for a war which will require our young men to risk their lives in fighting against the monstrous government of Hitler. That, however, is only an inference. Far from affirming its truth, the Administration has steadfastly declined to affirm or deny it.

The facts which the people know, or are permitted to know, show that the country is getting ready for a war which may be either a defense against invasion, or an all-out war to be launched by us on foreign shores. The plan of aiding Great Britain by every means in our power, "short of war," proposed by both candidates during the campaign, has been definitely laid aside. What has replaced it in the program of the Administration, no one knows, and the country, while called upon to make every sacrifice, does not know, even in general outline, the purpose of the sacrifice.

For some weeks a bloc of members of Congress, whose chief spokesmen are Senators Wheeler and Taft, have been preaching throughout the country a campaign against the participation of this country in the war. As practical men, they know that much of what has already been done by Congress and the Administration is equivalent, except in a technical constitutional sense, to acts of hostility against countries with whose Governments we are, again technically, on friendly terms. When they assure us that the United States can yet be kept out of the war, and if the people will bring sufficient pressure on Congress, this branch of the Government will act, they cannot mean that what has thus far been done, can be undone. They do not mean that the lend-lease bill will be repealed, that the emergency powers granted the President will be withdrawn, that the military camps will be closed, and our young men be returned to their homes. They know well that not one of these changes is possible.

Their aim is to prevent any act by this Government which would necessitate the sending of American forces abroad to take up active participation in hostilities against the Nazi Government. That they have any other purpose is inconceivable.

What is causing some of these Congressmen

grave concern is the question of convoys for ships carrying food and munitions to Great Britain, Greece, Yugoslavia and China. It is one thing to tell these Governments: "We will sell or give you what you want, but you must come and get it." It is quite another to assure them: "We will guarantee safe arrival of all we give or sell you, even if we must risk our entire navy in making the deliveries." If we turn the navy into a fleet of convoy vessels, we give them that assurance. In that case, Germany would not hesitate to attack our fleet with every type of armament at her disposal. Presumably, the American navy would not stand by to be sunk, but would fight. That would mean war in every horrible sense that can be conceived.

Perhaps Congress will forbid convoys. But if the Administration leaders in Congress speak for the Administration, that is doubtful. The truth seems to be that a ban on convoys would hardly fit in with the plans thus far adopted, some of which have been in operation for several months. The promise of aid without a fair guarantee that the aid will be given when needed, at the place needed, and in the manner needed, is not worth the paper on which it is written. Perhaps the promise should never have been made, but it was made, and so much has thus far been done, that it cannot be withdrawn. We do not hold that it should not be withdrawn. We merely say that it will not be withdrawn.

It did not seem possible last November, when Republicans and Democrats alike voted to uphold the policy, "Keep the United States out of war," that the question of convoys could ever be moved. To be quite frank, however, it is clear that today the question is largely academic. We hope that convoys will be banned, but convoys or no convoys, it seems to us that nothing but the direct intervention of the Almighty will keep the United States out of active participation in this war. One form of this intervention would be the collapse of the Nazi war-machine. But only that, or a like striking intervention will, in our opinion, keep the military forces of the United States within the boundaries of the United States.

FEDERAL MEDICINE

IN its case against the American Medical Association, the Government did not prove that medicine is a trade like shoe-making or iron-puddling. It simply proved that the Association adopted a bad policy when it chose to damn with faint praise the group health-insurance plan.

Some of these plans are unsound, and all need strict supervision. At their worst, they are a cruel fraud, but at their best, a great blessing to people of moderate incomes. On the whole, the Association has used its influence with medical schools, hospitals, and the profession, wisely. It should now use its influence to strengthen the health-insurance groups which can actually give what they promise. If these groups are allowed to fail, their place will almost certainly be taken by Federalized health-insurance plans.

THE THOMAS IN US

IT is related of a Saint that one day some friends came in great excitement to relate how in a neighboring village, Our Lord was manifesting Himself visibly in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. They urged him to return with them to witness the marvel which God had wrought. But the Saint would not go. He had plenty of work to do where he was, and he contented himself with answering, in the words of Our Lord found in the Gospel for tomorrow (Saint John, xx, 19-31): "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed."

We admire the Faith of this holy man, but most of us would not have imitated him. We believe all that God has revealed, and that His Church teaches us, but we feel much consolation when an opportunity is given us to behold signs and wonders. When at Lourdes not even one of the sick is cured during the procession of the Blessed Sacrament, we leave that blessed shrine of Our Lady somewhat disappointed. If we have an opportunity to visit the Holy Father, while we do not exactly expect him to work a miracle in our presence, we experience a degree of frustration when all that we see is a kindly, fatherly, old man who in his little sermon to the pilgrims speaks very much as our old parish priest at home has often spoken to us. When we conclude a very fervent novena for some temporal favor, and at noon on the ninth day, see what we have asked for bestowed upon another, we are tempted to question the efficacy of prayer. It is to be feared that many of us want our lives as Catholics to be a series of miraculous loaves and fishes.

The truth is that there is a spice of Thomas in most of us. Just as Thomas held back when the other Apostles told him, "We have seen the Lord," so we, at least on occasion, reserve the right to test for ourselves what is proposed by those who have been chosen by the Holy Spirit to rule and guide us. We do not, of course, reject the teaching which they, in union with the Successor of Peter, put before us; we are Catholics, we protest, but not weak-minded, credulous Catholics, people who can just about read and write, and who are probably on public relief. Let us hope that not many of us go this far, for that attitude manifests both pride and uncharitableness, the pavement of the road that leads to heresy.

In His mercy Our Lord sometimes treats people of this type, as He treated Thomas. His grace sweeps away our foolish pride, and in that blessed moment we cry out, "my Lord and my God." Our Faith, as Saint Paul tells us, is a reasonable Faith, but the Apostle does not mean that Faith is the product of unaided reason. The disposition to question the orders and arrangements of our spiritual superiors is not necessarily a sin against Faith, but since it does not help us to follow Jesus, it is a disposition which we must conquer. "Be not incredulous, but believing," is an admonition addressed to the learned as well as to the simple, to those in high station and in low. Blessed beyond measure are they who heed it.

CORRESPONDENCE

UNCLAIRVOYANT

EDITOR: Lately I have had occasion to reflect on the peculiar mental processes of people who call editors and writers cowards, scoundrels, etc., in letters which are unadorned by signatures or addresses. Speaking of strange thought patterns, I have even been taken to task for not writing about General Krivitsky's suicide before it occurred.

For the benefit of others who may attribute psychic powers to me I should like to renounce all claims to clairvoyance.

Milwaukee, Wis.

WILLIAM G. RYAN

STAY OUT OF WAR

EDITOR: At this critical period in our country's history there should be a constant reiteration in print and in speech of the conditions which should be fulfilled for a war to be just. For if ever the conditions were not fulfilled, it is in the struggle to which our leaders seem about to commit the flower of our American youth.

Death to thousands of our boys, terrible mutilations of large numbers, the spiritual demoralization of many, unemployment, poverty, the spread of radicalism and Communism—these will be some of the fruits of the conflict. Totalitarianism is a not unlikely result. And what can be a reason truly justifying this venture with all its attendant evils? If our country were really being seriously menaced, if all reasonable means outside of war had been attempted to remove the danger and had failed, if the defense of our country through war were really imperative, then a cause justifying our entrance would be had. But such is not the case.

For the sake of the record, so that future generations may not rashly judge that there was a general collapse of clear thinking and widespread intellectual bankruptcy, for the sake of many youths who believe our leaders have no truly sound reason for endangering their lives and the existence of our country by war, we must not fail to repeat that the slogan, "My country right or wrong," is ethically false, that a democracy and its leaders have their moral obligations as well as the totalitarian states, that two wrongs do not make a right, that one of these wrongs is to throw a nation into a modern war with all its terrible evils unless the country is truly menaced and all other reasonable and less extreme methods to protect the country have been attempted and have failed.

To be silent and not to emphasize the conditions of a just war after our experience as to what war can do to the material, moral and religious life of our country is very unwise.

It is late, but the guns have not yet begun firing.

May our leaders turn back before it is too late. They hold the destiny of the country in their hands. They will be wise not to abuse the trust, wise not to hurl the country into the war without considering the moral implications of their act. Expressions of regret twenty years from now will be of little help. Not only before the bar of history, but before the bar of Divine Justice they will be held to a strict accountability for their decisions and acts. Before these two tribunals the plea of political expediency, excuses replete with vague generalities will be neither effective nor valid.

Buffalo, N. Y.

J. J. O.

CAPITAL'S CASE

EDITOR: Father Smith has given us very good, practical articles in the late issues of AMERICA. In particular do I approve of his limited, yet wholehearted defense of capital, despite the unions. It has a case, at least when applied to the smaller employer, long in business—and his number is legion. The smaller employer often makes no profits at all, but just remains in the business he and his father have been in for many years and ekes out an ordinary comfortable living. He is really a victim of circumstances and must not be classified with the "odious" capitalists.

Father Smith's articles, especially that in the March 22 issue of AMERICA, show him to be an unbiased judge on the labor question. He defends capital and labor for what they are worth and for no more. He leans toward the cause of the working class because the latter needs more of a defense.

In the March 29 issue, John O'Reilly criticizes his own Catholic institutions for paying an unfair wage. Let me contribute a little to set him aright on his "sort of wonder."

Yes; it is true. Some institutions do not pay a fair wage according to union standards. There are dozens of non-Catholic institutions who do the same. What is the explanation? First, they are professionally charity concerns having no fixed income. They dole out a fair wage to many in the form of charity distribution. Other concerns are professionally profit-making and income-bearing and give out no charity.

Again, Catholic institutions have many jobs that are not heavy and the wage they pay fully covers the work. They often give out the jobs in order to

(The views expressed under "Correspondence" are the views of the writers. Though the Editor publishes them, he may or may not agree with them; just as the readers may or may not agree with the Editor. The Editor believes that letters should be limited to 300 words. He likes short, pithy letters, and merely tolerates lengthy epistles.)

give the men or girls a chance to make a little livelihood. Such workers must either *willingly* accept a lower pay or they will have to walk the city streets in quest of a job.

Finally, the institutions that Mr. O'Reilly "sort of wonders about" often accept reduced fees in, let us say, tuition or other services rendered. If they have to pay a just wage to *all* their workmen, there seems to be no reason why they should not demand full fees in return to get the necessary funds for the wages to be paid.

Mr. O'Reilly's friend must not demand of Catholic or other charity institutions strict justice when they only receive charity in return.

Poughkeepsie, N. Y. PHILIP H. BURKETT, S.J.

MEXICAN LAW

EDITOR: This letter may help to clarify ideas about conditions in Mexico. Many Americans may have been misled by statements of President Manuel Avila Camacho which were published in American newspapers not long ago. Camacho publicly declared himself a Catholic.

Archbishop Martinez, of Mexico City, commented that Camacho was the first President in many years to declare himself a Catholic, and exhorted the people to forget political differences and cooperate with the Government.

However, on December 30, Camacho issued a decree interpreting the law about nationalization of private property in such a way that now mere suspicion that a property may be used for the teaching of religion is sufficient reason for confiscation.

Two of the articles of Camacho's decree read:

Art. 1: The following become the property of the nation, represented by the Federal Government:

I. Churches destined for public worship.

II. Bishops' houses, rectories, seminaries, asylums or schools of any Religious associations, organizations, or institutions; convents or any other buildings erected or destined for the administration, propagation, or teaching of religion.

Art. 3: A building is understood to be destined for the administration, propagation, or teaching of religion when, with the knowledge of the owner

III. A school or teaching center of any religious denomination, tendency or purpose is lodged in the building.

V. In general, even when none of the above-mentioned acts takes place, suspicion of such destination may be gathered from data or circumstances allowing that conclusion. (*Christus*, March, 1941, p. 182 FF).

Archbishop Martinez' comment was made before Camacho issued the decree quoted above. It should be noted that the Archbishop's words were non-committal. He merely stated the obvious fact that Camacho was the first Mexican President in a long time to declare himself a Catholic, and he exhorted Catholics to give the Camacho administration the cooperation due to the Government for the common good. He did not say that Camacho is a practicing Catholic. He showed Camacho and the world that the Church today as always proffers the hand of friendship to any government that will respect the individual's right to life, liberty and the pursuit

of happiness. He was noncommittal about the future. Obviously he hoped for the best. Camacho's words implied that he would respect the rights of Catholics, especially with regard to education.

Only time will tell whether Camacho will fulfil the promise implied in his words. Camacho's interpretation of the Nationalization Law does not bode well for the future.

St. Mary's, Kans.

SOLOMON RAHAIM

NURSES' APOSTOLATE

EDITOR: John E. Reardon in his article, *Getting Better Lay Leaders for Vertical Lay Societies* (AMERICA, March 8), writes: "To modern economic society, the Church suggests a vertical structure composed of vocational blocs and informed by a principle of vocational self-expression and identity." While Father Reardon does not mention the existence of vocational blocs, he is cognizant of the fact that many vocational blocs of the lay apostolate are already functioning in Catholic Action.

The Nurses' Apostolate, in St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Dubuque, is an organization of Catholic graduate nurses. Outside of the chaplains and Sisters in Catholic hospitals, it is the nurse who has the best chance of bringing souls to Christ, as professionally she is called into the homes and hospitals of non-Catholics as well as caring for non-Catholic patients in Catholic hospitals.

The prayer card of the Nurses' Apostolate contains the acts of devotion necessary for salvation, and this motto: "Don't let a patient die without a thought of God and His mercy." It has been translated into French, Dutch, Italian, Spanish and Polish.

Catholic hospitals provide great opportunities for making converts, but these opportunities are neglected. Statistics show that in 1939, about sixty per cent of the patients in Catholic hospitals were non-Catholics. Investigation also shows the damaging fact that in many Catholic hospitals no effort is made to bring spiritual consolation to dying non-Catholics.

The prayer card of the Nurses' Apostolate has brought spiritual consolation to thousands of non-Catholics in every part of the world. As part of their program the Nurses' Apostolate has distributed about 82,000 prayer cards, these going into every State, to Canada, Alaska, Australia, and practically every country of Europe, Asia and Africa, not to forget a leper colony in British Guiana.

Readers of AMERICA are asked to help the Nurses' Apostolate bring spiritual aid and comfort to blind Catholics and non-Catholics. There are about 120,000 of these in the United States. The Nurses' Apostolate has for free distribution prayer cards of the Apostolate, printed in braille. In order to bring eternal light to these afflicted souls we must bring to them a thought of God and His Divine mercy through prayer. And the prayer card of the Apostolate contains the acts of devotion necessary for salvation.

Dubuque, Iowa.

ANNE STUART

LITERATURE AND ARTS

WANTED: NEW MYTHS FOR WRITERS

ELIZABETH DREW

IT has been said that a civilization is revealed by its myths. Myths are fables, based sometimes on ideas, sometimes on natural phenomena, sometimes on history or legend, and handed down in literature by the various artists of different races and periods who have interpreted them in the terms of their own times and temperaments. They are the embodiments of values—physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual—evolved by the instincts, intelligence and experience of the human race. For the human mind seeks patterns. It is driven by a craving for design, a craving to codify its apprehension of things, to confine the concept in the symbol, the idea in the image.

In a former article in this periodical, I pointed out that the weakness of the modern novel was the lack in most of our contemporary writers of any controlling *attitude* toward the material of which their books were made. Their stories do not grow from any inclusive vision of a universal order of which man is a part, and of which human experience is an illustration. They reveal no integrated "design for living," but remain reports of fragmentary aspects of existence, unrelated to any general philosophy of value. They lack just this element of cosmic, individual or social pattern. Modern literary art, in fact, has lost the faculty of making myths.

The myths of past ages were popular; that is, they belonged to the people as a whole, and were planted in the common ground which the literary artist shared with his public. They were a common cultural heritage, symbols of the faiths and ideas recognized as valid by all classes of the community. The stories of the classical gods and heroes, the romances of medieval chivalry, the folk and fairy-tales of the peasantry, belonged to all, and in the simple or complex ethical ideas which they embodied, the various strata of society found codes which united them into a corporate social body. But in addition to this storehouse of traditional culture, linking the past to the present, each age produced a crop of fresh fables and figures, symbols of the contemporary mind. Thus the traditional cultural heritage became enriched and refreshed by the constant addition of new material—material such as the stories and characters of the Elizabethan drama or the Victorian novel, of *The Pil-*

grim's Progress or the popular ballads of the people—which joined the company of their predecessors in popular favor, and added their own particular contemporary values to the general store.

Today the tradition of the culture of the people seems to have been killed by the arrival of the machine age. The movies, the radio and the popular press have simply swamped the old "folk literature." Small children still enjoy the fairy-tales of simple primitive peoples and folk literature lingers still in the so-called backward countries where the ubiquitous film and radio have not penetrated everywhere, and the people still enjoy communal cultural activities, expressive of the common ideas which bind them together in work or play. Today these are resurrected here for the sophisticated in programs of cowboy songs or traditional ballads; but as a natural part of the national life such art is as dead as the making of hand-made lace. Nor has the new mechanistic civilization yet inspired artists to embody any new standards, created in fables and figures springing from the new urban and industrial society, to replace those of the lost past. The new workers have proved completely uncreative: there is no popular culture made for and by them.

There has been one character only, created purely in the terms of the screen, which has attained real human significance: Charlie Chaplin's Tramp. The Tramp was a symbol: his adventures belonged to the world of the popular myth. He was the incarnation of the inextinguishable human values of courage and courtesy and simplicity of heart. He was the "parfit gentil knight" of the age of chicanery: the modern Don Quixote or Mr. Pickwick, always defeated by the material forces ranged against him, but always undefeated in soul. He shambled off undismayed at the end of each adventure, vanquished by fact, but constant in spirit; standing as a reminder to man of the heroic in the human heart.

But the days of the Tramp have passed, and if we ask ourselves what are the figures which unite all classes of the community in understanding today, and what is their value as stimulus and inspiration, the result is not encouraging. We have Ferdinand the Bull, Mickey Mouse, Charlie McCarthy and the characters in the comic strips and

the radio serials. There is material here for the work of the social anthropologist. The values upheld by the comic strips and the radio serials would make a very interesting study. There is great variety of simple sentiment and simple humor; and there is the pure escapism of the miraculous, in the fantasy world of Superman and his like.

The decay in the myth-making faculty is equally apparent in the literary culture of the so-called educated classes: the intelligentsia have no better showing than what we might call the ignorantia. Today both drama and novel have proved singularly uncreative in the spheres of significant plot and characterization. Conrad, Galsworthy, Arnold Bennett, Wells and Shaw were the last group of writers who have any memorable body of stories and characters which have enriched the common store of social myths. Lord Jim and the Forsytes, Constance and Sophia Baines, and Kipps and Candida, carried on the traditions of the great Victorians. They became symbols as real and enduring as Dick Swiveller or Colonel Newcome, Adam Bede or Tess of the D'Urbervilles.

But it is difficult to think of any created figures in the last twenty years who can compete with them. There are a few historical or public characters who have been presented in the terms of drama or the motion picture—Lincoln or Edison, for instance; but where are the creations of the imagination? Babbitt, perhaps, and the Robot might count. But it is significant that these should both be symbols of negative forces, not positive ones.

In addition to the poverty of significant characterization, the lack of structure and the shift in ideals of structure which have been so noticeable in modern writing have also contributed to the modern poverty of myth. The myth, we have said, always has pattern: it is an attempt to embody the ideas behind human experience in concrete illustrations of the inter-relationships of character and action. But of recent years the faiths which embody conceptions of human value have become increasingly weakened and nebulous to the modern mind. The community as a whole no longer accepts many of the old schemes of thought, and hence has not interpreted them in freshly conceived patterns of action and character, in modern metaphors, as it were, uniting the traditional experience of the community with the individual sensibility of the contemporary artist, and providing new symbols of old assurances.

In the place of such general symbols of universal experiences we have personal symbols, "symbolism," by which each writer incorporates his own personal faith or despair into images peculiar to himself, whose significance, indeed, cannot be arrived at by the reader without patient and particular study. This is particularly true of the poets. In the past, all the emphasis fell on the amount the poet shared with his audience: now it falls on his difference from his fellows, on the quality of his own unique vision.

In this way the private phantasmagorias of *The Waste Land*, or the *Cantos* or *The Bridge* are built

up—works in which the subject matter is the disintegration of the modern mind and of modern civilization, and in which Eliot, Pound and Crane, with varying degrees of technical skill, invent disruptive and fragmentary methods of expression to reflect the absence of pattern and harmony in the world of their own intellectual and spiritual experience. Yeats, too, created a private symbolism, much too strange and esoteric to become a communal faith, though he was in advance of all the poets of his generation, (with the exception of Eliot as he is today) in achieving a set of poetic images through which he communicated a personal vision of richly human values.

The novelists, too, betray the plight of the modern world in this same lack of organic structural power. A novelist such as Virginia Woolf can achieve a limited design by deliberately turning her back on the realities of her own age, and treating of life in the abstract as a problem for the meditative mind. By reducing her material to the small cultivated society to which she herself belongs, she can enclose and embalm her conclusions in a literary form which is perfect of its kind. Putting aside all large social, moral or economic problems, she can light the world of her individual relationships with continual subtleties and illuminations, and can find satisfaction in the faith of Mrs. Ramsey in *To The Lighthouse* that the ultimate harmony of the universe is reflected in those moments of serene yet intense apprehension of experience which seem to hold the stability of eternal truth.

But modern literature is sadly poor in any integrated and vital picture of the present, mirrored in an architectonic of plot and character, which communicates to us, as only an organically created structure can, the firm outline of a social and human faith for the future. Only an articulated plot, in which action reveals character and character creates action, can provide the symbol which is the essence of myth. Only in a created pattern emerging from the clash of Fate with Will can we get a glimpse of the cohesion, direction and order which the welter of emotional insecurities and intellectual distractions deny to us in the living of life.

For art gives form to the chaos of life. It is this which these sprawling, episodic, shapeless novels fail entirely to provide. Thomas Wolfe's last book, for instance, concludes with a moving statement of his achievement of a faith, in the terms of which he saw the meaning of his own life, and of life in general. But this remains a *statement*, unsupported by any illustration of it in the terms of created action. That living force is lacking in *You Can't Go Home Again*, just as it is lacking in the dynamic but inchoate *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. The immense popularity of Hemingway's book, like the immense popularity of *The Grapes of Wrath*, is an illustration of how the reading public craves for books in which the problems and struggles of modern man are directly revealed and illuminated in flesh and blood realities.

The instinct for myth persists, and the challenge to the creative imagination of the modern artist is to find new ones.

BOOKS

NOBLE WARRIOR-CONVERT AND GREAT THINKER

GRANITE FOR GOD'S HOUSE. THE LIFE OF ORESTES AUGUSTUS BROWNSON. By Doran Whalen. Sheed and Ward. \$3.75

SOMEONE once asked Orestes Brownson whether he had found life in the Catholic Church a bed of roses. "A bed of spikes, sir, of spikes," he answered in his incurably positive and straightforward way, so like Dr. Johnson's. Brownson never slept in any other bed; men of his stamp are born for spikes, the gaol, and the gibbet; often enough they get them literally. We Catholics supply most of the spikes for our great men, particularly when they come to us, as Saint Paul came, and Newman. After Almighty God has shown them His especial love by drawing them out of the morass of heresy, we offer them a bath and some refectation, and this elementary duty of Christian charity discharged, forthwith prepare for them spikes of piercing quality, warranted to penetrate the thickest hide. Why this should be, I do not know, unless the explanation is found in the remark once made to me by an ancient and holy convert that we Catholics are a "peculiar" people.

But converts can share this quality with us, and when two peculiar people live side by side, trouble arises to make us show each other the worst that is in us. For the greater part of his life, Brownson, a very great man, had to deal with small men, and there were times when, unlike Newman, he was unable to adjust himself to his environment. Newman thought Brownson "by far the greatest thinker America has ever had," and Brownson, if asked his opinion, would have agreed that Newman's estimate was substantially correct. Like most men of rare intellectual force, Brownson was aware of his powers, and suffered greatly from the fact that he was not always permitted to use them for the Church of God in the manner he thought best. True, the Bishops assembled in the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore, I believe, had blessed his work, and in 1854 Pius IX had styled him "that noble warrior-convert," but others, even among the Hierarchy, while admitting his genuine devotion to the Church, and his personal piety, never felt quite sure that his philosophical speculations were quite safe. On his side, Brownson was always ready to fight for his opinions, and not even the most lenient biographer can assert that he was ever easy to get on with.

Among those least sure of Brownson was John Hughes, Archbishop of New York. Since Mr. Whalen cites several stories to show that the Archbishop occasionally treated Brownson in a manner impossible to defend, it is regrettable that he did not also offer his readers an adequate analysis of the philosophical opinions at which the Archbishop shied. In the sense that Brownson had an explanation that could at least pass muster, the orthodoxy of these opinions has never been successfully impeached; but the Archbishop feared, and not wholly without reason, that were they adopted by the younger and less able men to whom Brownson addressed himself, many might be led astray. John Hughes was no philosopher, but he has always a watchful shepherd, and he had no mind to allow any dog near the flock for whose fidelity he could not personally answer. Unfortunately, he felt that he could not vouch for Brownson.

Mr. Whalen suggests another explanation. It is his view that the real cause of the alienation of the Archbishop from Brownson was a cabal formed by Seward, later Lincoln's Secretary of State, and Thurlow Weed, who spun his webs at Albany. Two slipper politicians



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never lived, and the details of the plot attributed to them sound exactly like Seward and Weed. The Archbishop of New York, they agreed, controlled the Catholic vote in the diocese; they needed that vote, and proposed to get it by catering to the aging prelate's vanity and love of power. His confidence gained, they would suggest from time to time that Brownson, who detested them politi- cally, was hurting the Church by his "intemperate" writ- ings and addresses. A breach with the Archbishop would destroy Brownson as a political factor in the minds of Catholics, and they would thereafter follow the Arch- bishop into the camp of Seward and Weed. After careful examination of Mr. Whalen's evidence, I am unable to accept this explanation. It seems simpler, and more in accord with what we know of both men, to conclude that Hughes distrusted Brownson because he never under- stood him. Perhaps Dr. Guilday's study of Hughes, for which we have long been waiting, will throw some light on Mr. Whalen's theory.

Since I have dwelt on what seem the shortcomings of this biography, I must now say that I congratulate Mr. Whalen for writing it. The volume is a merited tribute to a great man whom, living, we did not appreciate, and whose memory we have allowed to become dim. I hope that it will be recommended in every school, college and parish in the country, so that our young Catholics will no longer ask, when their elders speak of the great days of old, "Who is Brownson?" Mr. Whalen mentions his manuscript sources here and there, but there is no bibli- ography, and no index. "Leurs," referring to the Bishop of Fort Wayne, should be "Luers," and John Hughes was not made an Archbishop until July 19, 1850.

PAUL L. BLAKELY, S.J.

SUCCESS IN SCIENCE DESPITE ANTI-SEMITISM

QUEST. THE EVOLUTION OF A SCIENTIST. By Leopold
Infeld. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$3

TO anyone even remotely interested in the problem of anti-Semitism, *Quest* represents a significant chapter from the case book of life.

It is the autobiography of one who almost literally pulled himself up by his own boot-straps from the squalor of Cracow's Ghetto to a fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton and a Professor- ship of applied mathematics at the University of To- ronto. The story is told with both realism and pathos, and the frankness which occasionally, if rarely, over- steps the bounds of good taste can probably be explained if not excused by an attempt to conform to the trend popular today in English speaking countries.

We have in the first part of the book a remarkably vivid picture of the life of an orthodox Jewish family living in Poland shortly before the outbreak of the first World War. The son, destined to follow in the footsteps of his father who was an artisan and trader in leather, breaks, not only with the tradition of his family, but also with the religion of his race. Foraging in second-hand book stores, he almost instinctively selects a three vol- ume classic on Physics and with its aid alone becomes the self taught master of the subject, able to pass the "matura" with first honors.

The interlude describing his brief period of military service and his escape from the same by at least a par- tially feigned illness does not make equally inspiring reading, but the drive that carried Leopold from the Jewish school to the State University of Cracow without benefit of the gymnasium, bore him also to Berlin and back again to Cracow where, at the age of twenty-three, he obtained the first doctorate in Theoretical Physics conferred in free Poland.

Throughout the entire narrative which holds one's in- terest unflinchingly, runs the thread which is the theme of the book—the denunciation of the injustices of anti-

Semitism, seen in the concrete in the conspiracies and intrigues of the "Ayrian" continental authorities which were directed at blocking the attempts of Infeld to advance himself to a Professorship.

One might frequently question, however, the logic of the author's position. For example, when advised by a professor, who had hesitated to recommend him, to make a public statement that he was not a Communist, he refused flatly, saying: "It is up to the faculty to prove that I am a Communist and not up to me to prove that I am not." Perhaps a "clarification of the atmosphere" is needed here as well as in the religious and racial issues.

Undoubtedly the most interesting part of the book is the last third, which contains a shrewd analysis of the life and aims of a research student at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Princeton and an intimate account of his collaboration with Einstein both in original work and in the production of the popular volume entitled *The Evolution of Physics*. His admiration for the world's best known physicist is unbounded and he admits that to the end of his life he will shine by reflected glory as the "man who worked with Einstein."

If it be true as the psychologists claim that a man will stick a bayonet into one he does not know, but that the drive for friendship and human contact will beat the competitive urge to defeat one's neighbor when that neighbor is perceived as an individual human being, then perhaps both Jew and Gentile alike will benefit from the recounting of such personal experiences as we have here.

JOHN S. O'CONOR

DRAMATIC TREATMENT OF MINERS' PNEUMONIA

HAWK'S NEST. By Hubert Skidmore. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$2.50

"THE story of a condition hardly conceivable in a democratic government . . . the story of a tragedy worthy of the pen of a Victor Hugo, the story of men in the darkest days of the depression, driven by despair and the stark fear of hunger to work for a mere existence wage under almost intolerable conditions." That is no author's preface, nor does it come from the publisher's publicity experts. It is quoted from a report, dated Feb. 5, 1936, of a subcommittee of the House Committee on Labor after investigating the Hawk's Nest tunnel project executed in 1930-32 at Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, with "inhuman disregard for the health, lives and future of the employees."

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Silicosis, often called miners' pneumonia or miners' consumption, the result of breathing silica dust, can occur in thirty States with a million potential victims for whom there is still no adequate preventative legislation, despite efforts in Congress. From Gauley alone hundreds went into shallow unmarked graves; the rest of two thousand men and boys, most of them incurably diseased, were finally dispersed to protect the contractors on the \$16,000,000 job from legal suits and public exposure.

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tance. Happily, it lacks the latter book's bad features, only excepting some unsanctified language. It is not baited with the lewdness too often associated with "social" novels, and it does have some religious feeling in several poignant passages. NATHANIEL W. HICKS

MY THEODOSIA. By Anya Seton. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$2.50

HER mother has been dead for six years when we first meet Theodosia on the morning of her seventeenth birthday in mid-summer of the year 1800. During these six years we can conjecture and during the twelve years and four hundred pages of the book we can see that she is in very truth her father's Theodosia, patterned and fashioned by him. She adores him; he can do no wrong; he is the law and love of her life. Since that father is Aaron Burr, one should not be too greatly surprised at the result.

Strive as the author does, she cannot succeed in making Theodosia even tragic. For tragedy demands strength of character in a protagonist and from under the author's pen, Theodosia emerges a dull-faced, pitiful sort of would-be heroine. She is beautiful to look at—the author easily arranges that. But for the rest, she is but colorless, soft putty for the molding of her father's none too fastidious hands. When Theodosia dies, we may feel, perhaps, that it is a disaster; one could not dignify it by calling it a tragedy.

To me the book seems very mediocre for the very simple reason that it is not interesting. That defect, in what purports to be an historical novel, spells failure. I think that this is, perhaps, due to the fact that the author attempted the impossible—to write authentic history and at the same time to surround Aaron Burr and his Theodosia with an aura of romance. My only human emotion was one of very real, but disgusted, pity for the poor oaf who married her. ARTHUR J. SHEEHAN

NOT BY STRANGE GODS. By Elizabeth Madox Roberts. The Viking Press. \$2.50

THIS is the tenth book and second volume of stories from the pen of Miss Roberts. She has shown her versatility in two books of poetry and six full-blown novels. Here she presents six studies or vignettes that she calls stories, and polishes them up with classic super-restraint and tentative dips into psychology. She enlists her poetic power to charm the reader with words, and once she has him foggily mesmerized, she proceeds to abandon him in her world of muted passion, reluctant action where truth is only dimly revealed and then quickly veiled in reverie. She sees human life as bitter in all its draughts, knotted but never untied, rich in sense perception, inarticulate under emotion and unpatterned.

There is no escaping the association of these stories with old-fashioned impressionistic themes of years ago. "A Visit to Grandmother's," "Lost in the Forest" would set the manner and pointless equivalent that come to mind. "Yarrow Revisited" would be more apt to illustrate the literary finish. But the lack of continuity, the imperfection, in the sense of unendedness, is utterly destructive of interest in a story *qua* story. These six reflective and slightly fatalistic glimpses of life might all serve as chapters of a whole story. As they appear isolated, they disappoint you as definitely as a silent "movie" when you expect "talkies." Something that a story needs is missing, and even Miss Roberts with her sensitive language and little human intimacies cannot compensate for the loss in a story of the one all-essential element—interest.

I can well imagine the gracious bouquet of compliments that will be tendered the author, and the accompanying ribbons that describe her work and her present product as piquant, symbolic, revealing, enduring; I can even understand that such nebulous praise may be quite sincere. Still, Miss Roberts' stories do not bring satisfaction. They are skilfully carved little specimens of disillusionment, little frameworks that hold up words, little hints of drama without depth, little episodes that die one bleat after birth. RAYMOND J. MCINNIS

ART

THE sculpture of Carl Milles, now at the Orrefors Galleries, is a very complete, but creative, expression of baroque influence. This does not imply that the distinguished Swedish artist is a manipulator of a stylistic mode. On the contrary, there is evidence in his art of a natural affinity for baroque classicism. The baroque tradition still exerts a strong, general influence and it is reflected in the more vital examples of post-Renaissance and modern art. The freedom of the style, however, is only rarely accompanied by the beauty of design, individuality and control of the sculptural medium, that is the instinctive artistic equipment of this sculptor.

With all of its splendid qualities, this is, nevertheless, a decadent type of art. I do not mean, by this, that it is morally diseased. Its neo-paganism is healthy in quality and it is decadent in the sense that the art of Michael Angelo was decadent. In each of these instances the art is the expression of a civilization in its sophisticated stage, when it had gone soft at its spiritual core. The fulness of inner style, which this artist recaptures is, therefore, not in any way related to the American environment. This is worthy of comment because of his notable work in this country, where he has now taken residence.

Our major contribution in devised forms has been mechanical and structural. The clean vigor of the forms that result from this fact creates an environment that is unique in its character. This uniqueness is very natural to us and we are somewhat unaware of its special quality. This special quality is so pervasive, however, that the older types of art appear to be unhappy intruders when set against its dominant angularity which our pseudo-architecture tries unsuccessfully, it must in all honesty be admitted, to conceal.

The fountain he executed in St. Louis testifies to this unhappy fact. It contains much of the sculptor's best, instinctive, qualities. While very different in conception, this St. Louis fountain is in the general feeling of his justly famed Orpheus Fountain, in Stockholm. Fine as the St. Louis fountain is, it seems as foreign to its American setting as it would be native to this distinguished sculptor's homeland. As sculpture, however, this, together with the miscellaneous pieces shown in the exhibition, possesses unusual quality. The lack of relationship to the American scene makes this work suitable material for museums and for like artificial situations, such as the recent World's Fair at Flushing Meadows. The single figure he executed for that place was conspicuous in its serene beauty and was, by far, the best sculpture on the grounds. It may be said, in passing, that it had as a foil an extraordinary aggregation of indifferent architecture and bad sculpture.

In certain of Mr. Milles' American projects there is an indication of an effort to attain a more indigenous quality. Perhaps the unfortunate location of these works contributes to the less fortunate character of the results. In each instance the sculpture has been placed in architectural positions unsuitable for sculpture. His attempts to relate his work to this architecture, and to the atmosphere of everyday American life, only serves to accentuate his separateness from that life. These serious, and possibly less instinctive attempts at an indigenous expression, such as the doors for the State Finance Building at Harrisburg, the Peace Monument in St. Paul, and the "wood mural" in the Time and Life Building in New York, illustrate the danger of diverting a talent from its natural avenues of expression. This work shows no evidence of real indigenous quality nor of adequate relationship to architecture. The somewhat arid result bespeaks rather the application of a superior sculptural ability to problems for which an instinctive sense was lacking.

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THEATRE

WATCH ON THE RHINE. There is no question that *Watch on the Rhine*, produced by Hermann Shumlin at the Martin Beck Theatre, is the best play Miss Lillian Hellman has yet written. This is high praise, for no theatregoer who saw them has forgotten *The Children's Hour* and *Little Foxes*, those previous plays by Miss Hellman which have had such long and successful runs on the New York stage.

Both these earlier plays were written with a detachment from the human scene which made them, at moments, almost repellent—powerfully dramatic though they were. In them the author was merely an ironic spectator of the great game of life. Now, a certain warming humanity in her recent outlook has been a special feature of her latest play's appeal.

Miss Hellman is no longer the mere observer. She is, for the first time, not only a spectator but a woman whose heart is heavy and whose sympathies are keen. In short, she has written a superb and deeply moving play and she has made New Yorkers realize, for a couple of hours and with extraordinary vividness, the kind of world we are living in.

The story is a world story of the moment. In the first act, Kurt Mueller, a German engineer and a hater of the Nazis, arrives in Washington from Europe, bringing with him his American wife and their three children. They have been wanderers over the earth. Mueller is a secret worker and a leader of other workers against the Nazis. His visit to America is to leave his wife and children safe in the American home of his wife's mother near Washington, and to have a short rest himself. He is almost immediately recognized by Teck De Brancovis, a Rumanian scoundrel, who with his American wife is visiting Mrs. Mueller's mother's home when the pilgrims arrive.

De Brancovis, superbly played by George Coulouris, is the villain of the drama—worthless, contemptible, incredibly cold-blooded. He is subsisting with difficulty on the money he makes from gambling and blackmail. He discovers that Mueller has collected a large sum of money to take back to Germany for his cause. To get that money he promptly applies his blackmail methods, which will eventually destroy Mueller, his family, and his family's American protectors. With his bare hands, in a singularly vivid fashion and before the eyes of the audience, Mueller kills his enemy. Then he takes the body away with him to hide it in some Southern ravine, and presumably catches an airplane for Europe.

This is the bald outline of a superb plot, that alternately thrills and tugs at the heartstrings. The next point to make plain, in this necessarily brief review, is the perfection of the acting. Lucile Watson, as the American mother of Mueller's wife, has never done more brilliant work. Paul Lukas, as Mueller, is giving us one of the most perfect performances New York theatregoers have seen this season—and we have seen a number of them. As the American wife of Mueller, Mady Christians is doing by far the best acting she has ever done, and Eda Heinemann, as an independent and freespeaking companion of the American dowager, gives us a touch of lightness here and there that is very welcome in the tragic and powerful play. Miss Helen Trenholme, as the villain's wretched wife, handles a small part effectively, and there are three most taking children, admirably played by Peter Fernandez, Anne Blyth and Eric Roberts.

Eric, who is only a few years old, has a love for big words and pours them forth unwearyingly. John Lodge, as David Farrelly, only son of the American matriarch, plays a straight part in a fine manly fashion. In short, the acting in *Watch on the Rhine* could not be better. One is inclined to be lyric when one writes of it and of the play.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

FILMS

MEN OF BOYS TOWN. Father Flanagan's thesis that there is no such thing as a bad boy is, in his case, based on understanding rather than sentimentality, and the project which he has made famous is free from the multiplied inconsistencies of reformers who have no clear idea of what goodness is. This exposition of the workings of Boys Town is less compact than the original, introducing several lines of action, but Norman Taurog minimizes that defect by making one problem bear on another against the sobering background of Father Flanagan's difficulties with a housing shortage. A crippled and embittered boy redeemed from the reformatory by Father Flanagan, thawed out by a dog, wins the home vacated by the former mayor who gets into trouble by aiding a victim of a brutal reform school system. The reform school is reformed in turn by Father Flanagan, and a gift dispels the priest's financial clouds. In spite of its grim material, the picture is saved from mere harshness by humor, a sense of balance and an evidently sincere purpose. Spencer Tracy is excellently restrained as the crusading priest, and Mickey Rooney makes a genuine portrait of a role which leaves small room for mannerisms. Larry Nunn, Bobs Watson and Darryl Hickman are notable among the juniors of an able cast. The family will find this superior entertainment. (MGM)

THE GREAT LIE. This is a melodrama of marriage which, wonderful to relate, treats its problems with a degree of good sense, although its total impression is one of sentimentality. An aviation expert marries a concert pianist while he is intoxicated and regrets it even before the marriage is discovered to be invalid. A more appropriate match with an understanding woman is threatened when the pianist turns up again but, upon the report that the husband is lost in South America, she agrees to give up her child to the wife. The returning husband is faced with a choice between wife and child but a happy ending assures him of both. The plot material and the dialog are obviously *adult*, but the direction is happily free from the lower forms of subtlety and the production maintains a good level of taste. Bette Davis is effective in a quiet role which appears in noble contrast with Mary Astor's study in selfishness. George Brent is the much-married hero in an interesting film which will make its strongest appeal to feminine patrons. (Warner)

THE LADY FROM CHEYENNE. The satire in this marginal history of the fight for women's rights in the sovereign state of Wyoming has neither the bite nor the brightness one might expect from a survey of suffragette extravagances, and the plot which provides excuse for it needs a justification of its own. A schoolmarm upsets the plans of a political boss by campaigning for woman suffrage to get up a jury which will convict him. The bill is presented in the legislature with the assistance of some questionable lobbyists led by the boss' girl friend. Frank Lloyd's direction adds little point to the proceedings, and Loretta Young, Gladys George, Edward Arnold, Robert Preston and Frank Craven are unable to raise a dull film above the *adult* average. (Universal)

POT O' GOLD. The real victim of the feud which is the basis of this story will prove to be the unsuspecting moviegoer who will be forced to sit through an interminable plot relating how a radio program came into being over the opposition of its sponsor. James Stewart, Paulette Goddard and Charles Winninger go through an assortment of antics, musical and otherwise, and Horace Heidt's band fills out a vaudeville item which may amuse the family. (United Artists) THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS

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EVENTS

AT recent meetings, anthropologists have been building up conjectures concerning the aboriginal Americans. . . . According to some of these scientists, no skeletons older than 5,000 years have been found on the North American continent, whereas tools 15,000 years old have been unearthed here. . . . The existence of tools 10,000 years before the advent of human beings on the continent presents an interesting plot for some enterprising mystery-story writer. One suggested solution for such a novel might be a climactic denouement showing that the scientists are not so accurate in their calculations of the years as they think they are. . . . The anthropologists also declared that no traces of prehistoric apes have been dug up on the North American continent, a fact which leads to the supposition, in their minds, that the American Indian did not descend from an American ape, but from some unknown foreign ape. . . . The search is now on for the nationality of the Unknown Ape. . . . The reasoning of the anthropologists runs like this. . . . Since there were no prehistoric monkeys in America, the first American humans could not do their descending from monkeys here but had to do it somewhere else where there were monkeys to descend from. After they had finished the job of changing from monkeys to humans, they conceived the idea of becoming the first Americans and migrated here, no doubt without any quota restrictions. . . . Thus, even the pre-Colonial Americans were foreigners out of foreign apes. . . . The reasoning of the anthropologists demonstrates the workings of a fixed idea. . . . The human mind does not like mere probability. It hungers for certainty, and when genuine certainty is not to be had, it manufactures a counterfeit certainty. . . .

The theory of evolution is still only a theory. . . . Despite the world-wide efforts of untold millions of scientists, it has never been proven. . . . Unable to prove the theory, the scientists decided to declare it a certainty anyway, somewhat after the fashion in which printing-press money is declared to be real money when it is not. . . . And thus into the text-books, into the lecture halls, into the anthropological sessions stepped the theory disguised as a fact. . . . This modern age, which regards itself as so enlightened, ridicules the theories which passed for facts in former epochs. For example, the Ptolemaic theory which assumed that the earth was the central body around which the sun and planets revolved is today the butt of countless witticisms. . . . It is quite possible that some future epoch will pour on the theory of evolution the same stream of sarcasm that this age pours on the theory of the Alexandrian astronomer. . . . We may imagine a gathering of scientists three centuries hence and the newspaper dispatches describing the proceedings. . . .

Dispatch. April 12, 2341 A.D. The American Association of Super Scientists opened their annual convention yesterday. In the afternoon session, Prof. B. A. Stufchert read a scholarly paper entitled: "The Gullibility, Self-Deception, Stupidity and Fatuity of Former Ages." Prof. Stufchert blasted the unscientific methods of pre-modern eras. "In the period between 1850 and 1975 A.D., the unscientific orgy reached its peak," Prof. Stufchert stated. "In these years, instead of following the facts wherever they led, it became the custom to make the facts fit in with preconceived ideas. For example, consider the now-forgotten monkey-descent theory. A world-wide build-up and conspiracy favored this theory, and when the proof for it was not forthcoming, the so-called scientific circles felt if it wasn't true it ought to be and taught it anyway. As a consequence, several generations believed they were descended from monkeys and acted accordingly."

THE PARADER